

Grant, D.M. Modern play as a reflection of contemporary thought,
1942 1936-1941



BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Ed.

LIBRARY

The Gift of Miss D.M. Grant

Thesis
Grant, D.M.
1942



Thesis
Grant, D.M.
1942

THE MODERN PLAY AS A
REFLECTION OF
CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT

1936 - 1941

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the School of Education

Boston University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Education

by

Doris M. Grant

August 1942

Boston University
School of Education
Library

THE BOOKS THAT AS A

REVISION OF

CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT

1935 - 1941

C. D. M. Grant
School of Education
Aug 5, 1942
23115

the Faculty of the School of Education

Boston University

in the Department of Education

of the Department for the Deaf

Master of Education

by

Doris E. Grant

August 1942

Ed
1942
8
cop

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

1 SURVEY OF THE WORK

Section 1706-1742

Interview in the 1940s

Federal Theatre

FOREWORD

The author has used three methods of approach to the plays herein evaluated. Sometimes the thought of the play seemed most important; in other cases the author's significance required that he be given first place; and in still others the form of the play was emphasized. To certain key plays, several pages have been devoted; others required only one page for adequate treatment.

Feeling of war fever of 1936-1937

Answer to spirit of war

The long list of patriotic plays

The play was the theme of fight of war

The theatre's part in the entertainment of

the army

A brief statement concerning the theatre of

the future

12 SURVEY OF 1936-1937

The Army - State Theatre

The 12 Theatre Building - State Theatre

12
14
17

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

I	SURVEY OF THE WHOLE	1
	Seasons 1936-1941	
	Interest in the theatre	
	Federal Theatre	
	Tributary Theatre	
	The sociological thirties	
	The play of social significance	
	Odets, the chief spokesman for the theatre	
	Humor in the play	
	Place in our national culture	
	Place in the play	
	The contemporary as reflected in the play	
	Feeling of war fever of 1936-1937	
	Answer to spirit of unrest	
	The long list of patriotic plays	
	The play with the theme of dignity of man	
	The theatre's part in the entertainment of the army	
	A brief statement concerning the theatre of the future	
II	SEASON OF 1936-1937	14
	<u>The Women</u> -- Clare Boothe	14
	<u>Yes, My Darling Daughter</u> -- Mark Reed	17

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

I	SURVEY OF THE WHOLE	I
	Seasons 1936-1941	
	Interests in the theatre	
	Federal Theatre	
	Tributory Theatre	
	The sociological theatre	
	The play of social significance	
	Object, the chief spokesman for the theatre	
	Humor in the play	
	Place in the play	
	The contemporary as reflected in the play	
	Feeling of war fever of 1936-1937	
	Answer to spirit of unrest	
	The long list of patriotic plays	
	The play with the theme of dignity of man	
	The theatre's part in the enlightenment of the crowd	
	A brief statement concerning the theatre of the future	
II	SEASON OF 1936-1937	II
1A		
1B	<u>The Women</u> -- Glavin Booth	
1Y	<u>Yes, My Darling Daughter</u> -- Mark Sand	

	<u>Tovarich</u> -- Jacques Deval	20
	English adaptation - Robert Sherwood	
	<u>Excursion</u> -- Victor Wolfson	22
	<u>You Can't Take It With You</u> -- George Kaufman and Moss Hart	25
	<u>Johnny Johnson</u> -- Paul Green	28
III	SEASON OF 1937-1938	
	<u>The Golden Boy</u> -- Clifford Odets	31
	<u>On Borrowed Time</u> -- Paul Osborne	35
	<u>Prologue To Glory</u> -- H. P. Conkle	38
	<u>What A Life</u> -- Clifford Goldsmith	39
	<u>Of Mice and Men</u> -- John Steinbeck	41
	<u>Susan and God</u> -- Rachel Crothers	44
	<u>Our Town</u> -- Thornton Wilder	48
	<u>Shadow and Substance</u> -- Paul Vincent Carroll	52
IV	SEASON OF 1938-1939	
	<u>The American Way</u> -- Moss Hart and George Kaufman	55
	<u>Abe Lincoln In Illinois</u> -- Robert Sherwood	62
	<u>American Landscape</u> -- Elmer Rice	69
	<u>Kiss The Boys Goodbye</u> -- Clare Boothe	70
	<u>Here Come The Clowns</u> -- Philip Barry	72
	<u>The White Steed</u> -- Paul Vincent Carroll	76
	<u>Family Portrait</u> -- Lenore Coffee and William Joyce Cowen	80

V SEASON OF 1939-1940

<u>My Heart's In The Highlands</u> -- William Saroyan	84
<u>There Shall Be No Night</u> -- Robert Sherwood	89
<u>The Time Of Your Life</u> -- William Saroyan	92
<u>Margin For Error</u> -- Clare Boothe	96
<u>Key Largo</u> -- Maxwell Anderson	99
<u>Life With Father</u> -- Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse	103
<u>The World We Make</u> -- Sidney Kingsley	105

VI SEASON OF 1940-1941

<u>Lady In The Dark</u> -- Moss Hart	107
<u>Watch On The Rhine</u> -- Lillian Hellman	111
<u>The Wookey</u> -- Frederick Hazlett Brennan	114
<u>Flight To The West</u> -- Elmer Rice	116
<u>The Corn Is Green</u> -- Emlyn Williams	119
<u>My Sister Eileen</u> -- Joseph Fields and Jerome Chodorov	122
<u>Claudia</u> -- Rose Franken	124

VII CONCLUSION 127

BIBLIOGRAPHY 131

CHAPTER I

SURVEY OF THE WHOLE

SEASONS 1936-1941

There is only one theatre, the world. Only one play, man. There was only one beginning, birth. Only one end, death. Only one scene, the earth and the world and the world's appurtenances. Only one act, growth. I mean real.

William Saroyan

It is probable that during the last four years more discussion of the theatre took place in the House and Senate and in Congressional committees than in all the other years of our congressional history taken together. Eloquent Speeches were made for and against the theatre as an art and as an institution; Shakespeare came into discussion, and Marlowe, and Aristotle.

It was in 1935 that a group of patrons of the arts obtained from the Congress a charter for an American National Theatre and Academy, although there seemed to be little plan and no budget for such a project. However, unemployed theatre workers were to be assisted by a federal grant through the WPA with Hallie Flanagan, director. While the Federal Theatre Project recognized New York City as the center of American dramatic art, it operated through a regional plan suggested for years by the National Theatre Conference.

In four years the Federal Theatre produced over twelve-hundred plays, including an extensive classical cycle, an extensive religious cycle, American, modern plays, "Living Newspapers," and dance drama, vaudeville, musical comedy, marionette plays, pageant, and circuses. They gave an opportunity to a hundred hitherto-unknown young dramatists, and the list of dramatists whose plays they performed includes almost any American playwright of note from Bronson Howard and Clyde Fitch to Sidney Howard, Thornton Wilder, Clifford Odets,

and Eugene O'Neil. They built, equipped, and manned stages in tents, on trucks, on showboats, on platforms in parks, schools, and playgrounds, or overturned tables in remote C.C.C. camps, and in the wake of flood and disaster; they reclaimed, literally through their own labor, working long hours without watching the time clock, magnificent old theatres, which, before the government entered the picture, had fallen into disuse and often into decay.

They traveled by truck through the rural areas, in Illinois, Michigan, Maine, New York, Oklahoma. In Florida they covered the turpentine circuit and people came in ox cart, carrying lanterns, came in ox cart to see Shakespeare. This theatre spoke to a new audience -- a huge hitherto untouched audience -- which must be taken into account in any consideration of the possible future of the stage.

Edith J. R. Isaacs, Editor of Theatre Arts, feels that the handicaps put in the way of the Federal Theatre from its inception spelled its doom. She feels that subversive activity was a sturdy prejudice on which Congressmen know they can rely for public support when they intend to get rid of something for reasons which they do not care to be called upon to explain or justify. Thus in spite of statements from such theatrical authorities as Helen Hayes, Brooks Atkinson, Eugene O'Neil, Orson Welles, Burns Mantle, Raymond Massey and many others, the Federal Theatre, a people's theatre as many called

it, went out of existence by Congressional order in 1939.

"The Federal Theatre must remain," as Mrs. Flanagan says, "a blueprint, a memorandum for tomorrow," because "creating for our citizens a medium for free expression . . . and offering the people access to the arts and tools of a civilization which they themselves are helping to make, such a theatre is at once an illustration and a bulward of the democratic form of government."¹

Lionel Barrymore said in a speech during the last Federal Theatre fight, "The American people have never let anything be taken away from them permanently." Perhaps with the ground work laid, there may be a true National People's Theatre in the years to come.

Interest, too, of the American people in the stage has been displayed in the spread of tributary theatres, especially in college and university workshops, all over the country. So important have they become that the well-known Theatre Arts has devoted a long series of articles to the various tributary theatres. Many well-known theatrical authorities feel that one of the influential sources of fresh theatrical life will be such organizations as Pasadena Playhouse, the Carolina Playmakers of Chapel Hill, and other theatre groups. The Pasadena Playhouse is a California state

1. Hallie Flanagan, Arena, "Blasting: Work Suspended," Duell, Sloan and Pearce.

theatre by act of the legislature. It claims to be the only theatre in America, perhaps in all the world, ever to have given all of Shakespeare; hence it was natural that the first midsummer festival of 1935-1936 should have concerned itself with the Bard. The 1937 season was devoted to plays which told the story of the Great Southwest. Bernard Shaw was presented in 1938; eight plays of Maxwell Anderson were given in 1939; and eight of James Barrie in 1940.

William Saroyan pays the Pasadena Playhouse the following tribute: "In my opinion the Pasadena Playhouse is now the most formidable and worthwhile theatrical organization in the world. What it offers to the American playwright, from the most eminent to the greenest novice, is too valuable to go unused, and I personally hope to have numerous plays produced by the Playhouse."²

The period of 1930-1940 was known as the sociological thirties. The New Deal, the thought-provoking years of depression, the forward sweep of labor, were but a few of the factors to change the theatre as they had altered thinking and living outside of it. "The theatre which sang its angry song of social significance in the early and middle thirties--the theatre which found in Odets its most gifted and vigorous

2. William Saroyan, "Across the Board On Tomorrow Morning", Theatre Arts, July, 1941.

playwright -- represented a vital extension of the stage's province. Much of its thinking was childish in the simplicity of its solutions. Much of it was crude. More of it was of no greater literary value than party pamphlets have a way of being. But it possessed indignation. It made vocal the concerns of the nation's disturbed conscience."³

One can appreciate the fact that the whole social philosophy of America has changed within the last decade, and with the depression years, it, no doubt, had to change. In Odets there is little of the old pioneer individualistic philosophy; but rather is there that of the "world owes me a living" philosophy. Odets' people are vital. He writes about things that are worth thinking about.

But as James Agate, the well-known English critic has written, "His people have no background and they are unaware that anyone has had feelings like theirs before. They have no common experience to draw on. They know nothing of intellectual resource or spiritual solace. They fly to the sense to cure maladies of soul they cannot diagnose. The 'golden boy' is unhappy because he is not fulfilling himself. But he has never heard of frustration, and thinks to find this cure for unhappiness in high-speed motor cars."⁴

3. John Mason Brown, "Forward From 1940", Theatre Arts, February, 1941

4. James Agate - The Amazing Theatre, p. 134.

Through the ages most people have known frustration; some have had the background to withstand and rise above it all and to become bigger and better people. As no doubt Mr. Odets knows, spiritual tragedy is not achieved by accidental manslaughter. The test of a civilization is not its tyrants or its slaves, but rather the general run of happiness among the average wage earners. Is the cross-section of society Mr. Odets chooses to tell about a fair test of the society as a whole?

However, many people claim that instead of presenting ideas of social significance the theatre should be a place where they go to relax and laugh. After a hard day of worrying over the state of the world, they wish to forget reality. The theatrical seasons have shown that the American people like comedy. Think of the long run of such plays as Life With Father, The Man Who Came To Dinner, My Sister Eileen, to mention a few. Such well-known critics as Brooks Atkinson of the New York Times and William McDermott of the Cleveland Plain Dealer feel that humor and gayety are the best evidence of an inquiring spirit there can be. In Russia and other totalitarian states he had visited, Mr. McDermott observed that people rarely laughed and never with the gusto of an American audience. Although Stalin once ordered that life be gay and people enjoy themselves, no one in Russia was noticeably able to carry out his instructions. A world traveler

and a sagacious observer of American folkways, Mr. McDermott regards humor to be a concomitant part of freedom and anyone who stops to think about it must realize that he is right. For humor is not merely laughing at a joke. It is the saving grace of wisdom. It confesses to finding a show in the ludicrous imperfection of the human race. The sense of humor forgives, tolerates, makes mutual adjustments in the spirit of good will and sweetens community living.

It may be true that a national culture that is humorless may be strong, but is its strength not brittle? Might one not expect that culture imposed by force on millions of enslaved people will lack the elasticity of culture created out of the character of millions of free people? It is true that free cultures have been and still are being murdered during the last few years. Perhaps a lively sense of humor, like the one that is constantly bobbing up in America, can breed a false sense of security. At this point one might quote applicably Brooks Atkinson, "A quip is a feeble thing to offer in a crisis. But a sense of humor can also relax people who are steeled to a crisis. People who can see themselves in perspective have enormous moral reserve. Even a sense of humor has social significance when you come to think of it."⁵ Perhaps this popularity of the comedy is a reflection of a freedom-loving people with a sense of humor.

5. Brooks Atkinson, New York Times, June 15, 1941.

One of the most fascinating phases of reading and preparing for this thesis has been watching the change in society toward the contemporary as reflected in the drama. In the 1936-1937 season the theme of war, always thrusting itself into domestic affairs, as if incompetence, fear, and evasion could not have found it otherwise, formed the burden of the argument in Paul Green's Johnny Johnson. This play sought to allay the new war fever. It asked questions. Does anybody know what it is all about? How do we get in? How do we get out? What is the upshot for plain people scurrying along streets and around corners? There was bewilderment and inquiry. The great powers had "stumbled" into the World War in 1914. The playwright seemed to suspect as much concerning war in general.

The season of 1937-1938 still brought the play of social significance, of which Of Mice and Men was the best example. It brought, too, a number of plays to answer a spirit of unrest and doubt growing within the minds of people. Our Town and Shadow and Substance were two examples. Prologue To Glory was the beginning of a series of plays, which sprang from a growing respect for the heroism of the pioneers who built the country through years of struggle, a series which illustrated the increasing need of re-dedication to the ideals of freedom--political, religious, individual -- in which this country was cradled.

The season of 1938-1939 was to continue this spirit with Abe Lincoln In Illinois, The American Way, and The American Landscape, the former of which proved to be the greatest play. Many people felt that there was a bit too much pennant and banner waving, perhaps a little too much "Thank God We're Americans" in The American Way, yet few would doubt the sincerity of the authors in their attempts to uphold the American ideal in the face of a world disorder.

It was the season 1939-1940 that gave us There Shall Be No Night. Robert Sherwood has written, "I have heard many young dramatists explain their present inactivity by saying that in this, the most tremendous moment in the history of the world, there is nothing to write about."⁶ He explains also in the same article that the theatre to him is the spiritual home for one who is barred from the church by distaste for dogma but who still requires and demands expression of great faith.

Certainly with the invasion of Finland and all the events that accompanied it, Mr. Sherwood expressed a faith, that although there were times when he was ashamed of much in America, he felt that democratic ideals would conquer finally and that this war would not be the death rattle of civilization.

6. Robert E. Sherwood, "The Dwelling Place of Wonder," Theatre Arts, February, 1941.

It was this 1939-1940 season, too, that gave us that farcical thriller, Margin For Error. There the name of "Hitler" was held up to ridicule in such a way that, although the audience laughed, they realized that the play was saying, "This is what happens under totalitarianism; think about the results."

With the arrival of the 1940-1941 season there was really little lack of faith in the American ideal, little of the feeling that one must boost America, expressed in the number of plays produced. Burns Mantle's The Best Plays showed one play of social significance, Native Son, and six plays of comedy or comedy-mystery type. The stage seemed to be saying that it was playing a good part in helping to keep up and stimulate the morale of a people in a time of tragedy and unrest.

But, although the plays of the earlier seasons stressed the democratic ideal, these plays emphasized, too, the dignity and worth of the individual.

Robert Sherwood has written, "What Shakespeare said--what all the great dramatists have said--is that man is frail, man is vain, man is mortal, but that he is still capable of reaching, as did Prometheus, into the highest heaven and snatching the very fire from the hand of God."⁷

7. Robert Sherwood, "The Dwelling Place of Wonder," Theatre Arts, February, 1941

Yes, the Athenian dramatist managed to assert for the first time on earth the dignity of man and the modern playwright has carried the torch. The Wooky says it. Flight To The West and Watch on The Rhine may be called propaganda, but do they not, too, sound the call to pledge ourselves now to preserve the dignity and worth of the individual in the years to come?

One must not leave this last season of the theatre without mentioning the fact that the stage is being asked to present entertainment for the army. Here are gathered a heterogeneous group from all walks of life. No doubt democracy is never better served than when such men begin to break through the class barriers that have separated ^{them} in civilian life.

Louis M. Simon, a buck private, complains, "Snobberies, both highbrow and lowbrow, engender some of the most violent frictions that develop among the men. The condition results largely because the Army evidently can't see fit to provide any common meeting ground for the ideas."⁸ He suggests that the theatre can present ideas in their most easily assimilated form, emotionally and entertainingly.

Mr. Simon continued, "Many of the men find it hard to find intellectual companionship, either because they are

8. New York Times, Sunday, September 7, 1941

just not aggressive about searching for it or because they feel at an intellectual disadvantage because they haven't had the same opportunities as others. If such men saw a good play in company with their fellow-soldiers, they would have, not only the stimulation of the content of the play, but also the stimulation of an intellectual experience in common with their buddies--not highbrow plays but adult plays, imaginatively directed--fine plays, well cast."⁹ The playwrights have done their best to live up to buck private Louis M. Simon's assignment, and acting groups have been traveling from army camp to army camp over the country.

What has the future to hold for the theatre? The government may sometime admit a Secretary of the Fine Arts to the Cabinet. This time, however, Washington may have learned its lesson from the Federal Theatre. The confusion and necessities of that project which forced it to function simultaneously, as an almshouse and an art theatre, are not likely to be duplicated. A distinction will perhaps have been made between two kinds of relief--the financial relief which unemployed actors need, and the spiritual relief to which those starved for drama up and down the country are entitled and which the government may offer by financing tours of fine plays finely played at reduced admission. Plays

9. New York Times, Sunday, September 7, 1941.

will not be so rare in some sections that many people will not say with an American soldier boy, "Why, we had movies, but it was living people right on the stage doing the acting."

CHAPTER II

Reviews of 1936-1937

The stage is a platform for expression of which life is compressed and heightened, made larger and more significant.

Love Nigga

CHAPTER II

Season of 1936-1937

The stage is a platform for eloquence, on which life is compressed and heightened, made larger and more significant.

Lynn Riggs

THE WOMEN

by

Clare Boothe

Just before Clare Booth's play, The Women, was to be produced, George Nathan, the well-known critic, met the author. She told him that she felt that her play had little chance of success because it did not say anything. She said that it was just a play and that it did not have a line about Communism or Collective Security or the Decline of Idealism or any other of those things that seem almost essential to make a successful play these days. Yet The Women opened on the night of December 26, 1936, and thereupon proceeded to run at the same theatre for something like seven hundred performances.

One feels happy that the author did not call her play The Ladies, and indeed deeply glad that she did not call it Women, for it almost seems that the qualifying "the" limits the spraying vitriol to only a group of her sex native to the Park Avenues of America. Indeed this play is almost a Park Avenue sight-seeing tour--from cardroom to beauty parlor and bathroom. One hears of a husband's falling in love with a perfume seller; of the wife's learning about it through the manicurist, at the beauty parlor; of the Reno divorce which followed; and after some time of the remarriage of the divorced couple who really loved each other all the time. But along the way through the three acts, consisting of twelve scenes, one

listens to the catty remarks of the almost forty women in the cast; one visits a hospital shortly after a baby has been born; one hears of the Countess who has married a young and handsome Buck Winston, who may be made a movie star by using her money; one sympathizes with the little girl of a previous marriage who visits her father and has to say good-bye to his second wife whom she dislikes. One supposes that the big scene in The Women shows a girl in the altogether sitting in the bath tub.

"Was the interpretation of women in this drama a mere portrayal of frustrated and quarrelsome creatures belonging to the bourgeoisie, defeated and befuddled in the realm of conspicuous waste? Or was it a symbol of a sex about to be subjected to the function of rearing soldiers under a fascist ideology? These questions were asked and found no categorical answer by the playwright even in the reply made to the British censor when her drama was sent to England for review and possible productions!"¹ The reason put forward by the British censor for his objection to the play was the speech against maternity in which one of the women had indulged.

Although some appreciate the fact that Miss Boothe has keen wit and no doubt understands her subject, yet some might also agree that such spiteful writing is almost too poisonous for everybody's taste.

1. Charles and Mary Beard, America In Midpassage, p. 222.

One can easily understand why The Women played to capacity audiences, for one can imagine one woman saying to another, "Did you see 'The Women'? Why!!!" Of course, the listener felt that she must see The Women. Yes, here was novelty that America likes, an all-woman cast discussing rather boldly and certainly intimately what a certain class of women talk about. Burns Mantle says, "Miss Boothe not only removes the traditional four walls of her house, but likewise the partitions that hide bathrooms, powder rooms and maternity wards. Which serves to put the men a little uncomfortably in the position of so many listening if not peeping Thomases."²

Burns Mantle; Best Plays of 1936-1937.

YES, MY DARLING DAUGHTER

Mark Reed

Yes, My Darling Daughter is an interesting play because it faces the problem of sex in a modern manner. A few years ago this play might have been banned from some of our American stages, but today Burns Mantle chooses it as one of the best of the 1936-1937 season.

The author, Mark Reed, conceives the idea of having a mother brought face to face with the concrete result of her propagandizing for sex emancipation back in the so-called Greenwich Village movement of 1908. To represent three definite points of view -- rebellion, license, and a growing sanity toward sex, he chooses a feminist mother, a still glowing aunt of thirty-five, and a straight-thinking, college-bred daughter of 1937.

Next, he chooses to have the trio meet on a particular week end at the mother's summer home. There the aunt has come after her second trip to Reno to plan her third attempt at a marital career. There, too, the daughter ~~Ellen~~ has just returned after her graduation from college. There, also, to complicate matters, come two gentlemen -- one young Douglas Hall, who is in love with ~~Ellen~~; and the other, one Titus Jaywood, who proves to be an old lover of the mother back in the Greenwich Village days.

Now the author chooses to have the mother face the following situation. Since young Douglas can not get a job in America and has no money on which to get married before he leaves to be a salesman in Belgium, the young couple decide that they will have a week end together before he sails. Confronted with this situation and also with the idea that the daughter has written for her thesis on "The Contribution of Greenwich Village to the Cause of Freedom in American Art and Morals" and probably has learned much about her mother's pioneering for sex emancipation, the older woman is thus forced to face the concrete result of her own propagandizing.

Like all mothers, she first offers advice. "Ellen, you're running the risk of disillusionment. I wonder if I can explain. You know, we women have considerable moral sense when we don't love a man. Mighty little when we do. With a man it's the opposite. If he doesn't care for a girl, he's without scruples. If he does care, he is likely to develop a moral code only the angels can look up to. Suppose Doug gets moral and turns against you?

Ellen -- He won't!

Ann -- How do you know he isn't just taking advantage of your generosity?

Ellen -- Oh, that's old-fashioned! He's not taking advantage of me any more than I'm taking advantage of him.

Finally, though, after the daughter recognizes Jaywood as her mother's old lover and inquires if the parent then intends to stop her daughter, Ann sends the two off for the week end with her blessing, "Go quickly before I regain my common sense. Go. Climb'hills. Walk hand in hand under the stars. Make love. This may be your one great hour on earth. Go. I'll stand by you."

One is interested that the author has the glowing aunt unsuccessful in gaining her third husband. "Ann, it just can't be done. You can't give your life to too many men. They hold you cheap," is her final conclusion.

The play Yes, My Darling Daughter is not vulgar. In the words of Connie, "This younger generation is too much for me. In my day we had at least a shred of decency. At least we knew we were kicking over the traces. But Ellen apparently thinks what she is doing is all in the day's work. Frankly don't you find it rather shocking?"

"Rather shocking," says the twice-divorced Connie.

"Straight forward and sensible," says the younger generation of 1936-1937. "We are only continuing cutting the laws of prudery which the pioneer mothers of 1908 began."

TOVARICH

by

Jacques DeVal

(English adaptation by Robert Sherwood)

When we hear of Russian nobility who have become writers, waiters, taxi drivers in this country, it is not surprising to know that some playwright has seized upon the idea for the play Tovarich. So it is that the Russian couple, Prince Mikail Alexandrovitch Ouratieff and Grand Duchess Tatiana Petrovna come to Paris to become servants in a middle-class family. Of course the plot concerns their experiences, the complicated adventures of "you the butler and I the housemaid."

The spirit of the amusing dialogue is illustrated by the following:

Mikail--But are we fitted for such grandeur?

Tatiana--Why not? You have been a Chamberlain and I a lady-in-waiting.

Mikail-- That was in Petersburg, for the czar!

Tatiana--And this is Paris--but still for the czar.

One of the most interesting scenes is that in which Gorotchenko, the Russian commissar, the Tovarich, comes to visit the master and mistress of the household, but in reality to gain access to the kitchen and Prince Mikail and Grand Duchess Tatiana. There he wishes to get the signature of the

prince to the check for forty thousand francs which the czar had entrusted to him to deposit in a bank in Paris, and which Mikail has never touched, even though he has been close to starvation. But in the servant's kitchen Tovarich explains that he must have money for the manufacture of tractors and agricultural machines or five million wretched peasants will starve; he must have gold or he will have to give Baku and Petrovolsk and all the rich undeveloped oil wells into the hands of foreigners. What can they do?

This is the old trite mistaken identity plot, dressed, however, with enough modern trappings to make it highly entertaining. The idea of nobility forced into service always seems to strike a popular note, and Tovarich offers a little variety in its ending--the nobility do not return to the class of high-born aristocracy but stay among the bourgeois. In the last speech Tatiana is about to put out two empty milk bottles because, "If I don't leave them for the milkman, the Russian God won't do it for me."

In spite of our opinion of titles and class distinction, we do like to hear about nobility, as we love to entertain them. Then we like fun and there is lively humor in Tovarich furnished by the charm of the characters and the ludicrous situations in which they find themselves. One wonders, too, if many people do not like to feel that the old order must change to yield place to new. "Down with aristocracy!" they long have said.

EXCURSION

Victor Wolfson

"Cony Island's not a real happy island, you know that, and I been noticing how you hate to go back to the things you have to go back to. Well, me mates, passengers, friends, we're all on our way now to a real happy island where we can be really happy! It'll be an Eden, and they'll be no one there to work you until you're tired in the spirit, no poverty, no greed, no hatred but peace and plenty . . . You're to plant and plow and build anew. Laws, such as y' need, no more. You'll be happy, mates. Free to be men and women in all your parts. I mean your brain, your heart, your body and soul."

Such was the greeting that Captain Obadiah Rich gave to the human cargo of the good ship "Happiness" on its last excursion from Cony Island. He had watched this cargo Sunday after Sunday for thirty years eagerly rushing down to their old boat for the trip, but returning each Sunday night sad and dissatisfied after it was over. He had always felt that they had been cheated. Now he and his friend Jonathan wanted to take them to that magic island where in the distant future the two friends had planned to retire. If any did not wish to go, they would be put off at Norfolk, Virginia.

Varied and large was the human cargo that particular Sunday, perhaps in loyalty to the old captain whom they had

grown to love. Perhaps it was not surprising that the reception to Captain Obadiah's plan was not varied. Lollie, the clerk from Gimbel's, was ready to go any place where she wouldn't have to worry about losing her job. Mrs. Loschavio, the Italian housewife would go any place where she wouldn't have the smell of the markets in her nose all day. Aikens, the Communist, would know what they had to go back to anyway. Why shouldn't they be happy to start out building a new kind of society? Fichel, another passenger, was sick of worrying about being a Jew. Even the son and daughter of the owner of the steamship line agreed that they would be glad to journey to the magic isle.

The trip having been decided, they then began a discussion of their life in this Eden to be. The Communist was for starting a factory as soon as they arrived; they would be needing an industry. The Capitalist's daughter felt that they needed a nursery to bring up creative men and women, those who would not go after money like her father.

But, alas, the world must interfere, for Radio Press Bureau had announced that all harbor police had been sent out in search of S.S. "Happiness." When the radio announced that Captain Obadiah was holding passengers against their will, the old fellow was crushed. "How kin they go and say that? Lord, Lord, here I am - leadin' y' outa the wilderness t' a promised land and they go and call me an outlaw."

When the S.S. "Happiness" had to turn back, the old Captain warned his passengers, "Take the courage and vision back with you. Fight for the thing y' want back there, like y' fought for your far away island last night. Be men and women, mates, an' make y' like a glorious thing."

Excursion might be called a drama of escape, but it is more than that. It is rather a song of exaltation to the gallantry of the human spirit. It is a simple and heart warming play, not only in its plot but in the choice of lovable characters. After the years of depression and then those of the so-called recovery, one can readily see how an American audience might welcome the good ship "Happiness" and an 'excursion' to the magic isle.

When the U.S. "Happiness" and so forth back, the old
certainly wanted his happiness, "with the courage and vision
back with you. When for the thing I want back there, like
I want for you for every last thing, he was and
happy, happy, and happy, like a little boy."
Conclusion - It is called a dream of hope, but it
is more than that. It is to have a hope of something in the
future of the human spirit. It is a dream and hope
waiting for, not only in the past in the course of
history and progress. After the years of depression and then
the of the so-called recovery, we can hardly see how an
American and more like "Happiness" and
an "American" to the world.

WILSON BOOKS
245 N. 3rd St.
St. Paul, Minn.

YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU

George Kaufman and Moss Hart

For those people who thought politics, and probably history, senseless, Kaufman and Hart provided consolation and pleasure in You Can't Take It With You. In lines that must have fascinated persons who attributed the troubles of the time to "lack of confidence," old Grandfather Vanderhof suggested to the befuddled world that "life is pretty simple if you just relax."

"To members of the audience whose heads were still above the financial waters, the prescription doubtless seemed excellent; perhaps no others had passed through the box office to the auditorium. Yet there was something heartless in the suggestion. After seeing the play a sociologist had the temerity to contend that 'when Rome burns, the least a playwright can do is to say that he is sorry.' The comment, however, was scarcely pertinent; nor was the play itself to the people outside the theatre, who had nothing to take away with them when the judgment day came. If the theme was a trifle irreverent to economic royalists, it afforded no comfort to the millions that had not entered the Economy of Abundance. Anyway Hollywood thought it a good gamble for the screen and borrowed it from the regular theatre."³

3. Charles and Mary Beard, America In Midpassage, p. 630.

YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU

George Kaufman and Moss Hart

For those people who thought politics, and probably history, senseless, Kaufman and Hart provided consolation and pleasure in You Can't Take It With You. In times that must have reassured persons who attributed the troubles of the time to "lack of confidence," old Grandfather Vanderhorst suggested to the bewildered world that "life is pretty simple if you just relax."

To members of the audience whose heads were still above the financial waters, the prescription doubtless seemed excellent; perhaps no others had passed through the box office to the auditorium. Yet there was something heartless in the suggestion. After seeing the play a sociologist had the liberty to contend that when Rome burns, the least a playwright can do is to say that he is sorry. The comment, however, was scarcely pertinent; nor was the play itself to the people outside the theatre, who had nothing to take away with them when the judgment day came. If the theme was a little irrelevant to economic realists, it afforded no comfort to the millions that had not entered the Economy of Abundance. Anyway Hollywood thought it a good gamble for the season and borrowed it from the regular theatre.

Whether or not one took Grandfather Vanderhof's message seriously, one delighted in the family antics--the two old fellows who made fireworks in the cellar; "Penny" who painted and wrote plays; the daughter who "ballet danced" even through the setting of a table for a meal; the servants who had at least imbibed some of the Sycamore family philosophy, etc.

One delighted in the ludicrous situations; the arrival for dinner of the wealthy Kirbys on the unexpected evening; the visits of the Russian nobility, especially Grand Duchess Olga Katrina, whose cousin Prince Alexis would not speak to her because he worked at Hattie Carnegie's when she worked at Child's. "When he was selling Eskimo Pies at Luna Park he was willing to talk to you," her friend Kolenkhov recalls, a little bitterly.

Perhaps when the play is over, it is Grandpa and his philosophy that one remembers best. When Grandpa faces the wealthy Mr. Kirby, who doesn't approve of his son's marrying into the Sycamore family, the following conversation is illustration of the point one wishes to show.

Kirby -- Why do I keep on? -- Why, that's my business.
One just can't give up his business.

Grandpa -- Why not? You've got all the money you need. You can't take it with you.

Kirby -- That's a very easy thing to say, Mr. Vanderhof. But I have spent my entire life building up my business.

Whether or not one took Grandfather Vanderhoff's
message seriously, one delighted in the family antics--the
two old fellows who made fireworks in the cellar; "Penny"
who painted and wrote plays; the daughter who "dressed dances"
even through the setting of a table for a meal; the servants
who had at least imbibed some of the dysanore family philosophy;
etc.

One delighted in the ludicrous situations: the
arrival for dinner of the wealthy Kirby on the unexpected
evening; the visits of the Russian nobility, especially Grand
Duchess Olga Karpina, whose cousin Prince Alexis would not
speak to her because he worked at Karpis's carpenter's when she
worked at Child's. "When he was selling Karpis's fish at home
back he was willing to talk to you," her friend Elenka
recalls, a little bitterly.

Perhaps when the play is over, it is Grandpa and the
philosophy that one remembers best. When Grandpa takes the
wealthy Mr. Kirby, who doesn't approve of his son's marrying
into the dysanore family, the following conversation is
illustration of the point one wishes to show.

Kirby -- Why do I keep on -- why, that's my business.
One just can't give up his business.
Grandpa -- Why not? You've got all the money you
need. You can't take it with you.
Kirby -- That's a very easy thing to say, Mr.
Vanderhoff. But I have spent my entire life
building up my business.

Grandpa -- And what's it got you? Same kind of mail every morning, same kind of deals, same kind of meetings, same dinners at night, same indigestion. Where does the fun come in? Don't you think there ought to be something more, Mr. Kirby? You must have wanted more than that when you started out. We haven't got much time, you know -- any of us.

Kirby -- What do you expect me to do? Live the way you do? Do nothing?

Grandpa -- Well, I have a lot of fun. Time enough for everything -- read, talk, visit the zoo now and then, practice my darts, even have time to notice when spring comes round. Don't see anybody I don't want to, don't have six hours of things I have to do every day before I get one hour to do what I like in -- and I haven't taken bicarbonate of soda in thirty-five years. What's the matter with that?

No doubt Grandpa's philosophy was not wholly acceptable, but anyway it was good to think about. The American audience certainly seemed to think so. Apparently the absurd situations, the hilarious antics of the Sycamores, and the rumble of friendly laughter was exactly what thousands of playgoers appeared to be hungering for in this particular recovery year 1936-1937.

Grandpa -- And what's it got you? Same kind of mail every morning, same kind of letters, same kind of messages, same dinners at night, same indignation. Where does the fun come in? Don't you think there ought to be something more, Mr. Kirby? You must have wanted more than that when you started out. We haven't got much time, you know -- any of us.

Kirby -- What do you expect me to do? Live the way you do? Do nothing?

Grandpa -- Well, I have a lot of fun. Time enough for everything -- read, talk, visit the zoo now and then, provide my guests, even have time to notice when spring comes round. Don't see anybody I don't want to see. I have six hours of things I have to do every day before I get one hour to do what I like in -- and I haven't taken telephone or soda in thirty-five years. What's the matter with that?

No doubt Grandpa's philosophy was not wholly

acceptable, but anyway it was good to think about. The American audience certainly seemed to think so. Apparently the absurd situation, the hilarious antics of the synchronic and the tumble of friendly laughter was exactly what thousands of players appeared to be hungering for in this particular recovery year 1936-1937.

JOHNNY JOHNSON

Paul Green

Paul Green's name belongs chiefly, if not altogether, to the Carolina Playmakers of Chapel Hill with whom he has received his dramatic training and his first opportunity of watching his plays take shape in actual production on an actual stage.

Many years ago Paul Green said in a letter: "Eighteen years of ploughing and digging the sandy hills of Harnett County, of pulling fodder and sweating day after day with the Negroes, of watching the sun pass from East to West, sobered me to the bottom. I'll never be up to running off to New York to roost in Greenwich Village. My inspiration and stimulation are here in North Carolina, along the Cape Fear River, down in the bottom lands, up in the wide level lands. Everywhere there's something deep here, something of humanity that lasts like the dirt itself, down and right on down."⁴

Paul Green writes of the life of his day and is concerned with the people about him. His characters and localities may be of the South; yet his themes are universal.

Certainly the play Johnny Johnson has a universal theme. The action for this play opens in April 1917, preceding

4. Edith J. R. Isaacs, "Paul Green," Theatre Arts, July 1941.

the entrance of America in the last world war. The hero has just unveiled a statue he has designed in the interest of world peace. Soon after this event, America has entered the war; and in spite of the fact that Johnny sees little sense to the whole idea, when he learns that it is a war to end all wars, he is ready to enlist.

Once at the front, Johnny volunteers to go out to get a German sniper; but instead of taking the latter prisoner, when he learns that the young German can talk English, the two supposed enemies have a long and understanding discussion. As a result, both discover that they hate war; Johnny sends the sniper back to his own side with copies of Woodrow Wilson's speech to be distributed among the German soldiers.

Sometime later Johnny is sent to the hospital, after having been shot in the back. There when a nurse has left him, he turns on the laughing gas. When it strikes the nurse, she laughs and laughs.

Suddenly an idea comes to Johnny Johnson. Why not use the laughing gas on those who seem to want war? The Allied High Command is in session when Johnny suddenly appears before them with the laughing gas tank. The Council is arranging for a great offensive in which thousands will be killed.

"When you come right down to it," says Johnny, "what sense is there to human beings trying to cut and tear each other to pieces? You're all leaders--you're all-powerful over

us--you tell us to die for freedom or a flag or our country or whatever crazy idea it is--and we have to die Then end the killing--end it now."

As the leaders close in on Johnny, thinking him insane, the hero unscrews the tank of gas. The dignified generals begin to laugh; they decide to countermand the order for the great offensive. Everything is stopped; the soldiers from both sides begin to fraternize. But when the generals regain normalcy, they decide to send Johnny back to America. There in a State Hospital, he is declared a mental case-- "the superman complex through the technique of humility."

When Minnie Belle, his ideal, comes to visit him, she is informed that Johnny will have to stay in the hospital. Later when Johnny learns that she has married another, he does not want to leave the institution.

In the last scene some time has passed; Johnny Johnson is selling on the street little figures and toys that he has made himself. When a boy (Minnie Belle's child) wishes to buy a soldier, Johnny replies that he has no soldier to sell.

Instead of having the rattle and tumult of What Price Glory and other exhibitions of battle and sudden death, Paul Green relied upon the subtler arts of bewilderment and inquiry. Lloyd George had said that the great powers had "stumbled" into the world war in 1914, and perhaps that was the just word.

The playwright, Paul Green, seemed to suspect as much in reference to war in general. The American audience wanted to agree with Paul Green, too, back in the 1936-1937 season. Why should America fight anyway? What good to fight wars? What did anyone gain from the last war? Let the Europeans fight their own battles. There was no clean cut issue, for there had been no Pearl Harbor in the years 1936-1937.

THE GOLDEN BUT

Clifford Brame

CHAPTER III

Season of 1937-1938

Theatre can speak to mankind as no other art can speak, most directly, most movingly. People are hungry for the word that illumines, the idea that inspires, the emotions that warms and strengthens.

Mary Morris

THE GOLDEN BOY

Clifford Odets

Clifford Odets may be pitied and blamed. With the audacity of youth, he has ridiculed the American theatre and has even gone as far as to say that he seldom, if ever, paid it the honor of his attendance which sounds like a rather superior attitude to take toward that^{to} which he should at least show some measure of loyalty.

But perhaps Clifford Odets is not wholly to blame. Many have felt that he was greatly overestimated in the first place, and when his Paradise Lost was poorly received, he was so greatly affected that he left Broadway for the time and went forth to Hollywood.

For when the Group Theatre presented in 1935, Awake And Sing, Waiting For Lefty, and Till The Day I Die, Clifford Odets was hailed by many as a youthful genius. It is true that these three distinct Leftist plays, sympathetically performed, must have struck an interesting chord to the ear of the critic. He was likened to Sean O'Casey in his choice of theme, character, and the special technique of play writing.

Whether his theme is from Isaiah "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust;" or a plot which is a series of episodes, crucial moments in the lives of each of the working men committee who are "Waiting For Lefty;" or whether it is

Till The Day I Die suggested by a letter from Germany printed in "The New Masses," Clifford Odets uses a style that seems to be in tune with the subway rush, that subway way in which his characters form a part. For, certainly, his characters are of the people, and his themes are for the people.

It is true that many of the playwrights have been lured to the land of the cinema to make a fortune, perhaps with the hope of finally returning to Broadway to have the financial independence to write as they please. Perhaps this was true of Clifford Odets, for he finally returned to Broadway and to the Group Theatre for its 1937-1938 season with Golden Boy.

One of the criticisms that has been hurled at Mr. Odets is that he is devoid of the art of self-criticism and that this lack is one of his greatest faults. George Nathan, however, thinks that Golden Boy is the "best automatic criticism of its own author that has yet been indited."¹ In the play a youth with a love and talent for music is overpowered by the desire for sudden wealth and acclaim, leaves his music, listens to advice of dubious friends, becomes a prize fighter, and shortly, after a few easy triumphs is hailed as a White Hope. But this supposed success does not bring happiness; and when he breaks his hand and realizes that he can no longer go back to his violin, he grows more and more bewildered. In the end,

1. George Nathan, Encyclopedia of The Theatre. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. PP. 292-293.

the financial success which has given him material desires spells his doom.

Mr. Nathan would have us believe that Golden Boy is Clifford Odets himself. He says, "In that story you have Odets' own impatience with close study of and critical application to his dramatic writings, his wish to make a sudden flash in the world, his ready ears to flatterers, his desire for money (quickly obtainable in Hollywood) his several plays, facilely contrived, that brought him too soon to be hailed as a White Hope, his damaged dramaturgic hand, his increased befuddlement, and--if not yet by any means his artistic suicide--something that, unless he quickly gets hold of himself, may eventually lead to it."²

One may find Golden Boy pathetic and, at times, tugging at the heart strings. One feels for the youth of twenty-one who "wants his arm in gelt up to the elbow," the boy who would take fame so people won't laugh or scorn your face;" the boy "who longs to have a car like Gary Cooper's. One feels for the golden boy who discovers at last that he was "a real sparrow" who "wanted to be a false eagle" and who goes to his own death in the ring of speed in his Gary Cooper car.

It is interesting to read the following comment made

2. George Nathan, Encyclopedia of The Theatre. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. PP. 292-293.

by James Agate, the well-known critic of the English theatre. Golden Boy is a sparkling cross-section of life lived in New York's most garish noonday, a world of scorching asphalt, not peat. The characters move in a light as brilliant as that of the boxing ring. They give us life as nearly, as humorously, and as trenchantly observed as in our own Sean O'Casey. They belong to that new genre which America has invented in the last dozen years or so, the vortex with a still and bitter centre, in a word, the tragic farce. Add first class direction, and a furious energy of acting as though that art had just been invented, totally unlike the duplication of English esteemed successes, and we may, perhaps, be on the track of discovering why, to put it bluntly, the American Theatre is so much more alive than the English."³

When Clifford Odets has Joe say to Lorna, "People have hurt my feelings for years. I never forget. You can't get even with people by playing the fiddle. If music shot bullets I'd like it better -- artists and people like that are freaks today. The world moves fast and they sit around like forgotten dopes," one feels that the playwright is expressing the contemporary belief that society, and not the individual, is to blame for the frustration of the individual himself.

3. James Agate--The Amazing Theatre - P. 134.

ON BORROWED TIME

Paul Osborne

On Borrowed Time tells a story of an old man who chased Death up a tree and held him there while he tried to find a proper home for his grandson. You see there was the case of Aunt Demetria, who when Pud's father was killed, decided that she was interested in adopting Pud, especially since the father had left a few substantial thousands. Pud called her the "pismire" because she was the meanest of ants, and besides that, she had too much "fear of God" in her. Anyway "Gramp" and "Pud" decide that they must keep her from adopting "Pud."

When Aunt Demetria decides that she must prove Gramps insane, Gramps performs a number of experiments that lead the doctors to say that they will not take him to the insane asylum.

In the end both the grandfather and grandson decide that they must follow Mr. Brink if they are to be happy.

The curtain falls on the last speeches of Grandfather and Grandson with Mr. Brink, who, of course, typifies Death.

Pud - Are we deaded, Gramps?
 Gramps - Must be. I feel like a two-year-old.
 Pud - I feel like a two-year-old, too, Gramps.
 Gramps - Mr. Brink, why didn't you tell me it was goin' to be like this?
 Brink - My dear man, I've been trying to tell you how pleasant it is to go with me, but you wouldn't listen.
 Pud - You talk so funny, Mr. Brink.

Brink - Well, never mind me--Come on. Come along!
 Pud - But, where we goin', Gramps?
 Gramps - Oh, yes, by golly, that's important.
 Where are we going, Mr. Brink?
 Brink - You'll find out.
 Pud - How long will we be there?
 Brink - For eternity.
 Pud - How long is eternity, Gramps?
 Gramps - Right smart piece of time, boy.
 Pud - Anyway, we'll be there together, won't we,
 Gramps?

There is much of human appeal in the sometimes profane Grandfather who sends the minister who preached his son's funeral sermon an extra fifty dollars because he thought he looked shabby; "who always makes a lot of noise bellowin' to give the boys plenty of time to get out of the tree when they're stealin' apples;" the old Gramps who speaks of his wife as "Miss Nellie;" who swears he will stay and take care of his nephew if the "whole damn world goes to hell."

It is interesting to note two popular plays of the 1937-1938 season were concerned with Death. Both Our Town and On Borrowed Time made this universal experience a simple and lovely one, a peace after a sometimes rather hectic existence on earth. Certainly there was a response to the sentiment and humor in On Borrowed Time. Such little incidents as Gramp's difficulty with the task of helping Pud "unbutton to go to the twalet;" his lesson in etiquette that the little boy should not announce the fact to the neighbors but that he should simply say that he wants to wash his hands whether they are dirty or not has a simple, "earthy" appeal.

The audience smiles sympathetically with Gramps, who has finally decided that perhaps it is best to go with Mr. Brink and leave Pud with Aunt Demetria. But when he learns that she will send him to Miss Randall's girls' school when they are going to let in three boys next year, he shouts, "You're gonna make Pud into a sissy! By God, you are still a pismire! I'm gonna change my mind. I ain't goin' with Mr. Brink. I'm gonna stay right here and take care of Pud." Yes, as the two, Gramps and Pud, followed Mr. Brink, the audience feels that it is the best solution of the little boy's problem.

On Borrowed Time ran for one hundred and sixty-one performances on Broadway. We were not at war in 1937-1938; yet our nerves were taut as we thought of affairs at home and abroad. Perhaps it is not surprising that we were reflected this year as a society which delighted in the treatment of a universal theme in a simple and appealing manner.

PROLOGUE TO GLORY

E. P. Conkle

"Prologue To Glory" is an historical drama which deals with the formative years of Lincoln's life. It tells very simply of the young Lincoln of twenty-two who leaves his father's farm and takes his first job as clerk in a store in Salem. It tells of his desire for learning through reading and of his drifting into politics. Finally Prologue To Glory tells of the tragedy of Lincoln's early love, and of the effect of this tragedy upon his later career--in short the play, as the title suggests, is a "prologue to glory."

Apparently Lincoln will always be good theatre to an American audience. They enter the theatre with their minds already resolved and they come out with their minds unchanged, unless it be to love Lincoln even more. George Nathan says that there was only one play about Lincoln that was not popular; it was called If Booth^{Had}Missed and it was not appreciated because it presented a Lincoln who was pure fiction rather than the Lincoln that the audience knows and loves.

WHAT A LIFE

Clifford Goldsmith

What a Life has been a boon to the direction of the high-school play if to no one else. As soon as it was released for amateur production, directors seized upon it and Henry Aldrich appeared on high-school stages from Maine to California. If school teachers laughed at themselves and perhaps learned a bit; and if parents not only laughed at themselves but listened to the advice of Mr. Nelson in the play, What a Life not only furnishes an amusing evening, but also offers a bit of advice to many a bewildered mother and her offspring.

What a Life is "basically human and sufficiently plausible to re-create for a majority in every audience a picture of their own school-time adventure."⁵ That high-school principal's office where parent, student, and teacher bring their problems and at least try to have them solved is connotative to a good part of the audience of experiences of their past.

Poor Henry tries to get along with Latin and Shakespeare and a preparation for Princeton when he should have been preparing to go to the South Side Trade School for a course in art.

4. Burns Mantle--Best Plays 1937-1938; New York: Dodd, Mead & Co.

"Or do you consider the reform school a more satisfactory life's work?" adds, Mr. Nelson, as Mrs. Aldrich is framing a protest. "There is no other choice. Princeton is out! It was out the day Henry was born." Thus Mrs. Aldrich is led to see that even though her husband was a Phi Beta Kappa, her son never would be.

Henry's problem is very familiar to the public high-school system. With new educational laws and the economic conditions of the last few years, boys and girls are coming to our high schools, who fifteen years ago would have taken their places in various industrial fields. In spite of new shop courses, for many students whose talents lie within the realm of the machine rather than that of the book, there are still bewildered boys and girls who find themselves in the wrong realm. With Henry Aldrich, they see Hamlet "crawling with footnotes," which do not help them better to interpret or even translate what the bard says.

Yet there are modern parents who insist that their children take the college preparatory course. There seems to be a prevailing belief among many parents and students that a social stigma is placed upon the boy or girl who takes the shop or even the commercial course. Has the time come now, one asks, when society recognizes the worth of the individual who works with his hands? Surely the present cry for craftsmen will affect the courses in the modern public high school and boys and girls like Henry Aldrich.

OF MICE AND MEN

John Steinback

John Steinback's dramatization of his novel Of Mice And Men has the simplicity of the story of the Prodigal Son; yet in that simplicity lies its dramatic power. It is the tale of two men, migratory ranch hands; vital humanity without cheat or shame. One is George, who in his humanness has taken into his care, Lennie, a big hulk of a man, who is pathetic in his child mind and his desire to "love anything that is soft like velvet." It is that combination of physical strength and love of things "that are soft like velvet" that seals poor Lennie's doom.

Having found work on a ranch, the two are looking forward to the time when they will have a ranch of their own. Child-like and bewildered Lennie never tires of listening to George relate, "Some day we're going to get the jack together and we're gonna have a little house and a couple of acres and a cow and some pigs and we'll have a big vegetable patch and a rabbit hatch and chickens. And when it rains in the winter we'll just say to hell with goin' to work. We'll build up a fire in the stove and set around, and listen to the rain comin' down on the roof--"

In their eagerness they even interest Crooks, another ranch hand, who at first declares, "I see hundreds of

of men come by on the road and on the ranches, bindles in their hands. Every dam one of 'em is got a little piece of land in his head. And never a God dam one of 'em gets it. Jus' like heaven. Nobody never gets to heaven, and nobody gets to land."

So it is with Lennie and George. When their dream seems about to come true, they are caught in the grip of things and they never "get their heaven."

That last gripping scene one just can't forget, Curley's wife's hair is "soft like velvet," and Curley's wife is dead. When she screams, thinking that the big hulk of a man is going to hurt her, Lennie snaps her neck. Then he flees. In his mind, George sees Lennie being chased to be lynched. He realizes there is only one thing to do. When he finds Lennie in the woods, he shoots him as the only way out. Lennie falls, listening to George as he tells him of the ranch they will have. "It's gonna be nice there. Ain't gonna be no trouble, no fights. Nobody ever gonna hurt nobody, or steal from 'em. It's gonna be--nice."

In America In Midpassage the authors say, "In every scene and nearly every line it portrayed with throbbing life actualities reflected in the statistical tables of the Department of Agriculture, in the report of President's Roosevelt's committee on Farm Tenancy, and in Paul Taylor's monumental studies of migratory labor on the land. The great-

est dream of one of the men was to have just a little land of his own, a rabbit, some chickens--something to care for and love. For a moment it seemed as if the earth hunger of fifty centuries, the human hunger of all time, was epitomized in living symbols. Did all the defeated hopes merely suggest faults in the law of land tenure? Or something primordial? Was any other upshot to this tragedy possible? Since economists had not answered these questions, the novelists and the actors were within their rights in leaving the issue of labor on the land staring quizzically from the stage."⁵

First the 1937-1938 audience was a little aghast that the language of the play should be spoken from the stage, but it was, and the audience soon realized that it was in keeping with the characters, the theme, and the setting. Here again in the sociological thirties, the audience was left to realize that it was responsible for such characters as George and Lennie, and society was to blame for their misfortune. What was society to do about it anyway?

5. Beard, Charles and Mary--America In Midpassage, pp. 631-632.

SUSAN AND GOD

Rachel Crothers

It is interesting to read the varied response of the critics to Susan And God. George Nathan refers to it as "a fossilized fable of the separated couple reunited by their child and attemptedly given a touch of modernity by making the wife guilty of Buchmanism instead of adultery."⁶

Charles and Mary Beard say, "Rachel Crothers challenged the spirit of war and hatred exemplified in violent political movements . . . With 'death stalking the earth, death in the morning, and evening, and night, on land, in the sea, and in the air,' it seemed to Rachel Crothers that evil rather than good was dominant on the earth through the folly and indolence of people--men and women alike. Her Susan, accepting God as a symbol of the good, was just an average person, observing and taking part in the affairs of the hour and day."⁷

Rachel Crothers' plot concerns the results of Susan's "religion" upon one Susan Trexel, her friends, and her family. Susan Trexel has just returned from England where she has met Lady Wiggin. The conversation with her friends in which she tells of this meeting follows:

6. George Nathan, Encyclopedia of The Theatre. New York, Dodd, Mead and Co., P. 243.

7. Charles and Mary Beard, America In Midpassage. New York, The Macmillan Co., P. 623.

Susan -- To begin with she's one of the most distinguished women in England and has the most gorgeously magnificent place in Kent to say nothing of all the others--but that isn't it.

Charlotte -- That isn't why you're keen about her.

Susan -- Not at all. It's her soul that's developed to such a marvelous--For instance, the first night I was there the house was filled with people. I didn't know anybody and I was holding my chin as high as possible and trying to be as insulting to the English as they were to me--when Lady Wiggin herself floated in--and we all loved each other in a minute.

Charlotte -- What do you mean? Is she religious or something?

Susan -- Oh, it's much more than that. I mean, it's new and fresh and so practical--that's why she appeals to me.

Irene -- What appeals to you?

Susan -- Why--her--It isn't hers--of course. It's anybody's--everybody's. But she began the movement.

Charlotte -- If there's one thing I thought you'd never be guilty of--Susan--it's a movement.

Susan -- I know. That's why it's so wonderful. You wait. You'll see. You'll see. I can't even talk about it yet--but you can ask me questions.--I want to give, give, give all I can--to all of you.

Leonora -- What is it--if it isn't religion?

Susan -- Well--it is--in a way--but you can keep right on being what you are--an Episcopalian--or Ethiopian-- or Jew--or colored or anything. It's just love--love--love--for other people--not for yourself.

Thus Susan proceeds to reform. But like many another reformer, she seems to forget her own husband and daughter, who really need her, and goes forth to carry the movement to others. Her husband has promised to refrain from drinking all summer if she will stay with him and their daughter Blossom. Then comes a time when she realizes some other lady may be interested in her husband. "That is the day she is going to lead at Newport, the night Susan is going to tell, in her own humble way, how she found God. Then she is going to tell what Barrie, her husband, has gone through and how gloriously it has all turned out."

When poor Barrie realizes that he has been an experiment, he goes out and gets gloriously drunk. He argues that he thinks she doesn't know anything about God. "It's colossal nerve for you to stand up and talk to people who do. It's the show you like--the emotional excitement." Whether it is because she realizes that another woman is interested in her husband, or whether she is really sincere when she says, "Oh, dear God--don't let me fall down again," the author would know.

One might well interpret Susan And God as a satire. Does Rachel Crothers mean to poke fun at the reformer who goes forth to "do good"; the reformer, who in her zeal for reform also does much harm? Is the author laughing at the reformer who should have been looking after her own home when she would receive results for the little acclaim from the world? Or is Rachel Crothers saying sincerely that there is

much evil in the world and much of this evil is due to the indifference and indolence of the average person? If everyday people, no matter what their religion, could forget selfishness and sincerely think of others, what a vast amount of human energy could be used for the benefit of mankind! In spite of the fact that Susan says her religion is new, there is nothing new about it. When she says that it is fresh and practical, she is speaking the truth.

Why was Susan and God extremely popular with the 1937-1938 audience? First of all there was Gertrude Lawrence, and the American audience has acclaimed this English actress. Then, too, Americans have heard about the Oxford movement or Buchmanism, as some people insist upon calling it. Here was the movement at work. Next, the American audience has a sense of humor; perhaps they laughed at Susan. If they accepted the play seriously, they knew that the need of reform and the average person's indifference toward religion is a true reflection of our society.

OUR TOWN

Thornton Wilder

Thornton Wilder's Our Town deals with the three adventures of living--sub-captioned as "Life," "Love," and "Death." The story is the simple idyll of a neighborhood--talk about people, love and marriage, death and immortality. The setting happens to be Grover's Corners, New Hampshire, but in one speech, spoken by a country girl to her brother, the author shows that this little village really has, like every other little village, an imaginative connection with the profound riddle of the universe.

Rebecca--I never told you about that letter Jane Crofut got from her minister when she was sick. The minister of her church in the town she was in before she came here. He wrote Jane a letter and on the envelope the address was like this: It said: Jane Crofut, the Crofut Farm; Grover's Corners, Sutton County; New Hampshire; United States of America.

George-- What's funny about that?

Rebecca--But listen, it's not finished: The United States of America; Continent of North America; Western Hemisphere; the Earth; the Solar System; the Universe; the Mind of God--that's what it said on the envelope.

George-- What do you know!

Rebecca--And the postman brought it just the same.

George-- What do you know!

Perhaps the manner of presentation rather than the play itself was what at first interested the audience and the critics; for Our Town was given on a bare stage, with the story told in a combination of pantomime and Greek chorus recital by a narrator performing as a Stage Manager. The presentation reminded one of what he has read of a Shakespearian play in the bard's own day, or of what he has read of the old Chinese theatre presentation.

"The First Act," the Stage Manager explains informally, "was called the Daily Life. ^{First} The Act is called Love and Marriage." He will let anyone guess what the next act is going to be about. Thus one can easily see how simply the theme is treated. In fact it is the carefully planned understatement that adds to its appeal.

It is true that the American audience likes novelty, and the American playwright has tried to satisfy this desire. He has tried the old idea of the play within a play; he has made the audience a part of the play cast; he has attempted all kinds of novel devices in the mechanics of stage presentation. The American audience has enjoyed these experiments and asked for even more variety.

In Our Town, Thornton Wilder has the stage manager announce simply for example, "Here's some scenery for those who think they have to have scenery. There's a garden here. Corn .. peas .. and a lot of burdock." As he talks two of

Perhaps the manner of presentation rather than the play itself was what at first interested the audience and the critics; for Our Town was given on a bare stage, with the story told in a combination of pantomime and Greek chorus recited by a narrator performing as a Stage Manager. The presentation reminded one of what he has read of a Greek peasant play in the bard's own day, or of what he has read of the old Chinese theatre presentation.

"The First Act," the Stage Manager explains informally, "was called the Daily Life. The Act is called Love and Marriage." He will let anyone guess what the next act is going to be about. Thus one can easily see how simply the theme is treated. In fact it is the carefully planned understatement that adds to its appeal.

It is true that the American audience likes novelty, and the American playwright has tried to satisfy this desire. He has tried the old idea of the play within a play; he has made the audience a part of the play itself; he has attempted all kinds of novel devices in the mechanics of stage presentation. The American audience has enjoyed these experiments and asked for even more variety.

In Our Town, Thornton Wilder has the stage manager announce simply for example, "Here's a scene for those who think they have to have scenery. There's a garden here. Corn .. peas .. and a lot of butter." As he talks two of

his assistants appear bearing trellises, each with a climbing rose attached. One is set up at the right, the other at the left.

Perhaps the last act is one of the most unusual. There is a row of ordinary chairs at the right side of the stage, arranged in rows. These are the graves of Grover's Corner's dead, and the dead are sitting upright in them. The dead talk about the new arrival, young Emily Webb, who has died in childbirth. They greet her with cheerful Hellos. When Emily goes back to relive just one day of her life before she takes her final resting place on the hill, she finds she is only too glad to return. "Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it? -- every, every minute? Human beings are just blind people--"

In Our Town audiences were witnessing the experiences of everyday persons, living everyday lives, even as you and I. Here were a George and an Emily from Grover's Corners, New Hampshire or a George and an Emily from a similar village in California or in Texas. Here, life and death in this village has a connection with every other little village. The playwright has presented the profound riddle of the universe in the simple terms of ordinary human beings.

It is not that Our Town has any great character drawing, any memorable lines of dialogue, but it is its homely emotional co-operation with its audience that makes it popular. Maybe an American audience does like the understand-

his magnificent ancient bearing, looking down at a shining rose

attached. One is set up at the right, the other at the left.

Between the two is one of the most beautiful

There is a row of ornate carvings at the right side of the

stage, arranged in rows. These are the graves of Governor

Gouverneur, and the men are sitting nearby in them. The

dead talk about the new arrivals, young Emily Webb, who has

died in childhood. They speak her with cheerful hearts.

When Emily goes back to relieve just one day of her life before

she takes her final resting place on the hill, she finds one

is only too glad to return. "No way human beings ever realize

life while they live it -- every, every minute of human

being are just living people."

In Our Town sentences were witnessing the experience

of everyday persons, living everyday lives, even as you and I.

Here were a George and an Emily from Governor's County, New

Hampshire or a George and an Emily from Governor's County, New

California or in Texas. Here, life and death in this village

was a connection with every other little village. The play-

wright has presented the profound truths of the universe in

the simple terms of ordinary human beings.

It is not that Our Town has any great dramatic

gratification, any responsible lines of dialogue, but it is the honesty

emotional co-operation with the audience that makes it

popular. Maybe an American audience does like the universal

ing love of an elderly married couple, the tender laying of a wreath upon a wife's grave, the young bride in white at the marriage altar; and maybe, too, some critic might call us sentimental for liking such scenes. We like Dickens, too, and, of course, he is sometimes accused of being sentimental. Is it not more to the credit of the 1937-1938 audience that they liked such simple and universal scenes rather than the military formations of marching feet and the salutes to a Nazi dictator?

ing love of an elderly married couple, the tender laying of
a wreath upon a wife's grave, the young bride in white at
the marriage altar; and maybe, too, some critic might call
us sentimental for liking such scenes. We like Dickens,
too, and, of course, he is sometimes accused of being
sentimental. Is it not more to the credit of the 1937-1938
audience that they liked such simple and universal scenes
rather than the military formations of marching feet and the
salutes to a Nazi dictator?

SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE

Paul Vincent Carroll

Conflicting forces are constantly at work. In the Irish play Shadow and Substance, the author says that the rebel schoolmaster and the Canon represent the two forces that between them crush Brigid, the little servant girl, who represents the spirit of the nation.

Brigid is the servant girl in the Canon's household. For days she has been having visions in which St. Brigid comes to her and talks. The young girl explains to both the Canon and the schoolmaster about her visions and each warns her against such imaginings.

Brigid is very much concerned over the quarrel between the schoolmaster and the Canon, both of whom she loves and respects. However, the schoolmaster has written a bitter book against the church in Ireland, a book which has created such animosity that the Canon dismisses him from the school and replaces the schoolmaster with one who will do the churchman's bidding.

In explaining her visions the little girl says:
 "She stood lookin' out at the big boulders of the hills, and her speakin' low. Then she said when I came close to her that the hills were just like long, long ago, and they were the hint to men to build in the heart forever and ever, instead of with stone and mortar and with the pride that puts a stone on

SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE

Paul Vincent Carroll

Conflicting forces are constantly at work. In the Irish play Shadow and Substance, the author says that the rebel schoolmaster and the Canon represent the two forces that betwixt them crush Brigid, the little servant girl, who represents the spirit of the nation.

Brigid is the servant girl in the Canon's household. For days she has been having visions in which St. Brigid comes to her and talks. The young girl explains to both the Canon and the schoolmaster about her visions and each warns her against such imaginings.

Brigid is very much concerned over the quarrel between the schoolmaster and the Canon, both of whom she loves and respects. However, the schoolmaster has written a bitter book against the church in Ireland, a book which has created such animosity that the Canon distances him from the school and rebukes the schoolmaster with one who will do the churchman's bidding.

In explaining her visions the little girl says: "She stood looking out at the big boulders of the hills, and her speaking low. Then she said when I came close to her that the hills were just like long, long ago, and they were the hint to men to build in the heart forever and ever, instead of with stone and mortar and with the guide that gave a stone on

another stone without meanin'. And a lot more that the words will not come to me for I fell asleep listenin' to her--her voice was sinkin' me all the time into Sleep."

In the end, Brigid goes to the help of the schoolmaster when the mob has risen against him and his bitter book. She is hit by a brick intended for the schoolmaster. Then it is that the Canon promises her that he will do St. Brigid's bidding--he will go to the chapel yard when the angelus is ringing and invoke St. Brigid three times; then kiss the stone and say, "Mary of the Gael, show us the way through the dark." The Canon promises, too, "I will bend for you. The Canon will bend. He will stoop. He will--believe."

Then the two representing the conflicting forces, the Canon and the rebel schoolmaster, draw the coverlet over Brigid's face. The Canon wonders if he is just "an embittered old man living here with shades too glorious to forget." The schoolmaster regards him from the door, his face a study in mingled hate, pity, and respect. Then he turns slowly and goes out.

There is much in the Irish drama that sings, a spiritual music that sweeps over the footlights to have its effect upon the audience. Anyone who has a "feel" for beautiful literature finds his ear attune to Paul Carroll's music. Even the one speech quoted from the dialogue of the little servant Brigid illustrates poetic beauty. But there is more than beauty, there is feeling and meaning, the

another scene without meaning. And a lot more that the words
will not come to me for I fell asleep instantly to her--her
voice was sinking me all the time into sleep.
In the end, Bridgid goes to the help of the school-
master when the mob has risen against him and his bitter book.
She is hit by a brick intended for the schoolmaster. Then it
is that the Canon promises her what he will do for Bridgid's
bidding--he will go to the chapel yard when the angels are
ringing and invoke St. Bridgid three times; then kiss the stone
and say, "Mary of the Gael, show us the way through the dark."
The Canon promises, too, "I will bend for you. The Canon will
bend. He will stoop. He will--believe."

Then the two representing the conflicting forces,
the Canon and the rebel schoolmaster, draw the coverlet over
Bridgid's face. The Canon wonders if he is just "an embittered
old man living here with angles too glorious to forget." The
schoolmaster regards him from the door, his face a study in
singled hate, pity, and respect. Then he turns slowly and
goes out.

There is much in the Irish drama that strikes a
spiritual note that sweeps over the footlights to have its
effect upon the audience. Anyone who has a "lapse" for
beautiful literature finds his ear attuned to Paul Garroli's
music. Even the one speech quoted from the dialogue of the
little servant Bridgid illustrates poetic beauty. But there
is more than beauty, there is feeling and meaning, the

inquiry into the inner spirits of men and women. The American audience of 1937-1938 knew well that, although the conflicting forces happened to have ~~their~~ setting in Ireland, and happened to be an Irish Catholic clergyman and an Irish schoolmaster, the setting might well be in any country where conflicting forces are at work to crush the spirit of a nation.

indulge into the inner spirit of men and women. The
American audience of 1957-1958 knew well that, although the
conflicting forces happened to have their setting in Ireland,
and happened to be an Irish Catholic clergyman and an Irish
schoolmaster, the setting might well be in any country where
conflicting forces are at work to crush the spirit of a
nation.

THE AMERICAN WAY

George Eastman and Hans East

CHAPTER IV

Season of 1938-1939

A theatre can stand for a time without any

hard and fast intentions, but in the long run, if

it is to live, it must have a vision as well as a

practical goal.

Lynn Riggs

CHAPTER IV

Season of 1938-1939

A theatre can stand for a time without any
hard and fast intentions, but in the long run, if
it is to live, it must have a vision as well as
practical goals.

Lynn Riggs

THE AMERICAN WAY

George Kaufman and Moss Hart

Despite the miseries of the Depression and the recurring fears of the near economic decline and of war, the bulk of the American people had not quite lost their basic asset of hopefulness.

In Since Yesterday, Frederick Lewis Allen says, "It was still their instinct to transform a suburban swamp into a city of magic and call it 'The World of Tomorrow'. In that world of tomorrow, the show which they liked best of all and stood in long queues to enjoy was the General Motors Futurama, a picture of the possible delights of 1960. They still liked to build the biggest dam in creation and toy with the idea of the happy farmsteads it would water, the enormous engines it would drive, the new and better business it would stimulate. They still liked to stand with elbows on the fence at the edge of the farm and say, 'Sooner or later I aim to buy those fifty acres over there and go into the thing on a bigger scale.' They still scrimped to give their sons and daughters 'a better education than we ever had,' feeling obscurely that a better education would be valued in the years to come. A nation in a long ordeal had not yet lost heart."¹

1. Frederick Allen, Since Yesterday, New York, Harper and Brothers, Publishers.

THE AMERICAN WAY

George Kaufman and Moss Hart

Despite the miseries of the Depression and the recurring fears of the near economic decline and of war, the bulk of the American people had not quite lost their basic sense of hopefulness.

In Since Yesterday, Frederick Lewis Allen says,

"It was still their instinct to transform a suburban swamp

into a city of magic and call it 'The World of Tomorrow'.

In that world of tomorrow, the show which they liked best of all and stood in long queues to enjoy was the General Motors Futurama, a picture of the possible delights of 1960. They

would like to build the biggest dam in creation and joy

with the idea of the happy farmsteads it would water, the

enormous engines it would drive, the new and better customs

it would stimulate. They still liked to stand with elbows on

the fence at the edge of the farm and say, 'Sooner or later

I aim to buy those fifty acres over there and go into the

thing on a bigger scale.' They still seemed to give their

sons and daughters 'a better education than we ever had,'

feeling obscurely that a better education would be valued in

the years to come. A nation in a long ordeal had not yet

lost heart."

I. Frederick Allen, Since Yesterday, New York, Harcourt and
Brothers, Publishers.

The country was thinking that whatever sins might be charged against the New Deal, at least it had done its task humanely. This item loomed large in the eyes of men who looked abroad in 1938 and 1939 and thought of the hordes of refugees seeking footholds when they would not be "regarded as superfluous."

While people were thinking these thoughts, and at the same time wondering about the menace of Fascism, four playwrights presented three plays to the American public in which the American dream and the American ideal were vividly portrayed, and perhaps romanticised. These plays were The American Way by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman; Abe Lincoln of Illinois by Robert Sherwood; and American Landscape by Elmer Rice. It was as if all three plays were saying, "Don't you realize what your own country has to offer? Have you forgotten the American dream?"

Long before The American Way was actually produced, Broadway was abuzz with rumors. Some said that the Rockefellers had ordered it written to fill the second largest theatre in New York, and also, that the Rockefeller family felt that something should be staged in the American theatre that would serve to stimulate a saner patriotism and healthier tolerance than the last few years had developed. The truth was that the play was evolved in the usual manner and that Mr. Hart had thought of the idea at the time that Noel Coward's "Cavalcade"

The country was thinking that whatever might

be charged against the New Deal, at least it had done its
task humanely. This item loomed large in the eyes of men who
looked abroad in 1938 and 1939 and thought of the number of
refugees seeking footholds when they would not be "regarded
as superfluous."

While people were thinking these thoughts, and at

the same time wondering about the success of fascism, four
playwrights presented three plays to the American public in
which the American dream and the American ideal were vividly
portrayed, and perhaps romanticized. These plays were The
American Way by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman; Abel Lincoln
of Illinois by Robert Sherwood; and American Landscapes by
Elmer Rice. It was as if all three plays were saying, "Don't
you realize what your own country has to offer? Have you
forgotten the American dream?"

Long before The American Way was actually produced,

Broadway was abuzz with rumors. Some said that the Rockefeller
had ordered it written to fill the second largest theatre in
New York, and also, that the Rockefeller family felt that
something should be staged in the American theatre that would
serve to stimulate a sense of patriotism and healthier tolerance
than the last few years had developed. The truth was that the
play was evolved in the usual manner and that Mr. Hart had
thought of the idea at the time that Noel Coward's "Cavaliers"

was produced but had given up the plan at that time.

The American Way is propaganda for the tradition of freedom. It is expressed in popular terms for a greater audience than the commercial theatre ordinarily serves. The authors are telling a story of a German cabinet maker who settles in a small Ohio town in 1896, gratefully throws his lot in with his American neighbors, prospers, suffers financial reverses according to the varying fortunes of the country, and finally dies in an attempt to combat the political penetration of a Nazi group.

The American Way is a panorama of representative scenes out of the past, overflowing with humanity. The play opens at Ellis Island in the year 1896. As the curtain parts, dawn is just breaking over New York Harbor. In the distance the Statue of Liberty is dimly seen through the morning mist. A crowd is gathered waiting the arrival of a boat. On the edge of the crowd is a young German, Martin Gunther, who greets his young wife Irma, and his baby boy and girl, Carl and Lisa. Suddenly as the polyglot crowd disappears into America, the scene changes to a small American town--Mapleton, Ohio. At the end of the square is the Republican Headquarters, and the party's candidate is William McKinley. Down street is Democratic Headquarter's and the candidate is William J. Bryan. Martin and Irma Gunther are walking down the street; the former is showing his wife the new house he has for her, and

was produced but had given up the plan at that time.

The American Way is propaganda for the tradition of

freedom. It is expressed in popular terms for a greater

audience than the commercial theatre ordinarily serves. The

authors are telling a story of a German cabinet maker who

settles in a small Ohio town in 1896, gratefully throws his

lot in with his American neighbors, progress, enters financial

reverses according to the varying fortunes of the country, and

finally dies in an attempt to combat the political generation

of a Nazi group.

The American Way is a panorama of representative

scenes out of the past, overflowing with humanity. The play

opens at Ellis Island in the year 1896. As the curtain parts,

down is just breaking over New York Harbor. In the distance

the Statue of Liberty is dimly seen through the morning mist.

A crowd is gathered waiting the arrival of a boat. On the

edge of the crowd is a young German, Martin Guntner, who

grieves his young wife Irma, and his baby boy and girl, Carl

and Lisa. Suddenly as the polyglot crowd disappears into

America, the scene changes to a small American town--Haddon,

Ohio. At the end of the square is the Republican headquarters

and the party's candidate is William McKinley. Down street is

Democratic headquarters and the candidate is William J. Bryan.

Martin and Irma Guntner are walking down the street; the

former is showing his wife the new house he has just, and

the bank when he has two hundred dollars saved. He is boasting that his children will grow up free Americans. A Heckler appears and calls "Votes for women."

The next scene is a school house. Children are reciting the oath of allegiance. They are on their way to greet Mark Twain, the great American, just as last week they had greeted Admiral Dewey, the hero of Manila Bay.

When the curtain opens again, we see Martin Gunther's cabinet shop. Martin has just lost an order because he has refused to give up a customer, an "insufferable suffragette." According to Martin, "You have the right to chain yourself to lamp-posts; I have the right to choose my customers." However when Mr. Brockton, the husband of the would-be customer saves the order for the cabinet-maker, Martin explains, "Miss Baxter has a right to what she thinks, even if that is different from what Mrs. Brockton thinks. All my life, Mr. Brockton, my one idea was to come to America, why? Because then no one can tell me what I must do, how I must think." Gunther has a furniture factory now. The Wright Brothers are beginning to fly. Electric lights, too?

Then comes July 4, 1908, and the celebration of the townsfolk at a joyous Fourth of July celebration, giving term prizes to school children on subjects that today seem trifling.

Into the scenes of children coming from the movies breaks the news of Austria-Hungary's declaring war on Serbia.

the bank when he has two hundred dollars saved. He is boasting
that his children will grow up free Americans. A Hecker
appears and calls "Votes for women."

The next scene is a school house. Children are
reciting the oath of allegiance. They are on their way to
greet Mark Twain, the great American, just as last week they
had greeted Admiral Dewey, the hero of Manila Bay.
When the curtain opens again, we see Martin Gantner's

cabinet shop. Martin has just lost an order because he has
refused to give up a customer, an "immortalist anti-trustee."
According to Martin, "You have the right to chain yourself to
lamp-posts; I have the right to choose my customers." However
when Mr. Brodton, the husband of the would-be customer saves
the order for the cabinet-maker, Martin exclaims, "Miss Baxter
has a right to what she thinks, even if that is different from
what Mrs. Brodton thinks. All my life, Mr. Brodton, my one
idea was to come to America, why? Because then no one can
tell me what I must do, how I must think." Gantner has a
furniture factory now. The Wright Brothers are beginning to
fly. Electric lights, too?

Then comes July 4, 1908, and the celebration of the
township at a joyous Fourth of July celebration, giving
prizes to school children on subjects that today seem trifling.
Into the scenes of children coming from the movies
breaks the news of Austria-Hungary's declaring war on Serbia.

is suggested
When the questions of Martin's son's joining the army, the mother holds back; she doesn't want her son to fight against the country and people she still loves. Karl, the son, is called a slacker; rocks are thrown at the Gunther house. Martin decides that their allegiance can not be divided. Karl goes to war and dies for America. The first act ends with the triumphal return of the doughboys from France, believing that they have made the world safe for democracy.

In Act II Mr. Kaufman and Mr. Hart find it more difficult to find symbols that carry so much general significance. The past can be romanticized, giving it charm and sweetness, but the period in which we are living is always harshly realistic. Scene I opens in 1927. The first member of the third generation of Gunthers has arrived. "Lindy" has flown the Atlantic.

By February 1933 the Depression has come. The bank in Mapleton may close. People have gathered in little groups with their bank books. Martin Gunther appeals to the people; he asks them to have faith in Samuel Brockton. "I am putting everything I have in the world in this bank." In spite of Martin's appeal there is a riot. Then comes the voice of Franklin Roosevelt: "Our success comes from no value of substance.... The money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization."

A group of W.P.A. workers appear, soon to be followed

When the question of Martin's son's joining the army, the mother holds back; she doesn't want her son to fight against the country and people she still loves. Karl, the son, is called a slacker; rocks are thrown at the Gunters house. Martin decides that their allegiance can not be divided. Karl goes to war and dies for America. The first act ends with the triumphant return of the doughboys from France, believing that they have made the world safe for democracy.

In Act II Mr. Kaufman and Mr. Hart find it very difficult to find symbols that carry so much general significance. The past can be romanticized, giving it charm and sweetness, but the period in which we are living is always harshly realistic. Scene I opens in 1927. The first member of the third generation of Gunters has arrived. "Alindy" has flown the Atlantic.

By February 1937 the Depression has come. The bank in Babylon may close. People have gathered in little groups with their bank books. Martin Gunters appeals to the people; he asks them to have faith in Samuel Houston. "I am putting everything I have in the world in this bank." In spite of Martin's appeal there is a riot. Then comes the voice of Franklin Roosevelt: "Our success comes from no value or substance.... The money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization."

A group of W.P.A. workers appear, soon to be followed

by Martin Gunther's grandson and the girl he wants to marry. The grandson, embittered, says, "Still a wonderful country. Took everything my grandfather had. His business--money. Lost it all in one day that time the bank went under. But it's still a wonderful country. What's so wonderful about it, I'd like to know? If I can get a job on the W. P. A., will you marry me?"

It is only a short time after the Gunthers have celebrated their golden anniversary, that Karl, the grandson, has been attending secret meetings. One night his grandfather follows him to the picnic grove where he is about to pledge himself to a Nazi order. In his effort to prevent his grandson from taking such a pledge, the old cabinet maker is thrown back into the hysterical mob; he has met his death defending democracy.

The last speech in honor of Martin Gunther is as follows: "To Martin Gunther we pay a just homage. For it may be truly said that he was a great American. I can think of no finer epitaph. I see in the life of Martin Gunther, and even in his death, high hope for America. It will go on, this country, so long as we keep alive the thing that Martin Gunther died for. Let us keep this land of ours, which we love so dearly, a land of hope and freedom."

The American Way played 164 performances at the Center Theatre in New York. It seems that the American ideal has persisted in spite of the barriers that have constantly

by Martin Gantner's grandson and the first he wants to marry.

The grandson, embittered, says, "Still a wonderful country.

Took everything my grandfather had. His business--money. Lost

it all in one day that time the bank went under. But it's

still a wonderful country. What's so wonderful about it, I'd

like to know? If I can get a job on the W. P. A., will you

marry me?"

It is only a short time after the Gantners have

celebrated their golden anniversary, that Karl, the grandson,

has been attending secret meetings. One night his grandfather

follows him to the picnic grove where he is about to pledge

himself to a Nazi order. In his effort to prevent his grandson

from taking such a pledge, the old cabinet maker is thrown back

into the hysterical mob; he has met his death attending

democracy.

The last speech in honor of Martin Gantner is as

follows: "To Martin Gantner we say a just homage. For it may

be truly said that he was a great American. I can think of no

finer epitaph. I see in the life of Martin Gantner, and even

in his death, high hope for America. It will go on, this

country, so long as we keep alive the thing that Martin Gantner

died for. Let us keep this land of ours, which we love so

dearly, a land of hope and freedom."

The American Way played 184 performances at the

Center Theatre in New York. It seems that the American ideal

has persisted in spite of the barriers that have constantly

stood in its way. The American audience knew that the whole play was romanticized, but they wanted to believe. In spite of what critics say, what harm to have some propaganda for freedom when there was so much propaganda for other causes?

October, 1937. Robert Sherwood, the writer, says in his supplementary notes to his play, "Lincoln's great achievement, that of which we are proud to be the heirs of the world, long after his death was the solidification of the American ideal. But this is not a play of achievement; it is, rather, a play about the solidification of Lincoln himself as the American promise, effected by his death, some of which came from his own reasoning mind, some from the surrounding circumstances, some from accidents which he was not concerned."

"Having seen Sherwood's play, and having heard that the audience itself participated, I believe it carries more weight of the American ideal." Thus writes Carl Sandburg in his "Foreword" to the play.

And, last, to quote Frederick Lewis Allen in Simple Yesterday we read, "As the decade grew old and America became more conscious, Robert E. Sherwood epitomized the American faith in his moving tale from the life of Abe Lincoln in Illinois."²

The play opens with that scene in which Lincoln

1. Frederick Allen, Simple Yesterday, New York, Harper and Brothers, Publishers.

stood in its way. The American audience knew that the whole
play was romanticized, but they wanted to believe. In spite of
what critics say, what harm to have some propaganda for freedom
when there was so much propaganda for other causes?

ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS

Robert Sherwood

Abe Lincoln In Illinois reached Broadway in mid-October, 1938. Robert Sherwood, the author, says in his supplementary notes to his play, "Lincoln's great achievement, most of which was accomplished by the echoes of his words, long after his death, was the solidification of the American ideal. But this is not a play of achievement; it is, rather, a play about the solidification of Lincoln himself--a long, uncertain process, effected by influences, some of which come from his own reasoning mind, some from his surrounding circumstances, some from sources which we can not comprehend."

"Having seen Sherwood's play, and having noticed how the audience itself participated, I believe it carries some shine of the American ideal." Thus writes Carl Sandburg in his "Foreword" to the play.

And, last, to quote Frederick Lewis Allen in Since Yesterday we read, "As the decade grew old and fascism became more menacing, Robert E. Sherwood epitomized the democratic faith in his moving tableaux from the life of Abe Lincoln In Illinois."²

The play opens with that scene in which Mentor

2. Frederick Allen, Since Yesterday, New York, Harper and Brothers, Publishers.

ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS

Robert Sherwood

Abe Lincoln in Illinois reached Broadway in mid-

October, 1938. Robert Sherwood, the author, says in his supplementary notes to his play, "Lincoln's great achievement, most of which was accomplished by the echo of his words, long after his death, was the solidification of the American ideal. But this is not a play of achievement; it is, rather, a play about the solidification of Lincoln himself--a long, uncertain process, effected by influences, some of which come from his own reasoning mind, some from his surrounding circumstances, some from sources which we can not comprehend." "Having seen Sherwood's play, and having noticed how the audience itself participated, I believe it carries some shine of the American ideal." Thus writes Carl Sandburg in his "Foreword" to the play.

And, last, to quote Frederick Lewis Allen in Since Yesterday we read, "As the decade grew old and fascism became more menacing, Robert E. Sherwood epitomized the democratic faith in his moving tableaux from the life of Abe Lincoln in Illinois."

The play opens with that scene in which Mentor

S. Frederick Allen, Since Yesterday, New York, Harper and Brothers, Publishers.

Graham, the patient schoolmaster, is teaching Abe from a grammar book. In teaching the imperative mood in its hortatory sense, he uses as an example, Daniel Webster's speech before the Senate over the right to secede from the Union. Abe reads the words aloud, "Liberty first and Union afterwards; but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, that other sentiment, dear to every true heart--Liberty and Union!" Act I follows Abe through his meeting with Ann Rutledge, his running for the State Assembly, Ann's death, and closes with Abe's sorrow for the loss of Ann.

Act II finds Abe established in the law office of Stuart and Lincoln. Abe has returned from the circuit and is telling his friends that he has met the Todd family, people who spell their name "with two D's--which is pretty impressive when you consider that one was enough for God." He has also shaken the hand of President Martin Van Buren who said to him, "'We've been hearing great things of you in Washington,' but I found out later he's said that to every cross-road's politician he'd met."

When Abe's friends scold him for not having more ambition and not wanting to help in the fight against slavery, he offers "I'll be a member of the Electoral College- - - -I am opposed to slavery, but I'm even more opposed to going to war."

Later we learn that Abe has met Mary Todd, and that

Graham, the patient schoolmaster, is teaching Abe from a
grammar book. In teaching the imperative mood in the hortatory
sense, he uses as an example, Daniel Webster's speech before
the Senate over the right to secede from the Union. Abe
reads the words aloud, "Liberty first and Union afterwards;
but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light,
that other sentiment, dear to every true heart--Liberty and
Union!" Act I follows Abe through his meeting with Ann
Rutledge, his running for the State Assembly, Ann's death,
and closes with Abe's sorrow for the loss of Ann.

Act II finds Abe established in the law office of
Stewart and Lincoln. Abe has returned from the circuit and is
telling his friends that he has met the Todd family, people
who call their name "with two D's--which is pretty impressive
when you consider that one was enough for God." He has also
shaken the hand of President Martin Van Buren who said to him,
"We've been hearing great things of you in Washington," and
I found out later he's said that to every cross-road's
politician he's met."

When Abe's friends scold him for not having more
ambition and not wanting to help in the fight against slavery,
he offers "I'll be a member of the Electoral College--"
as opposed to slavery, but I'm even more opposed to going to
war."

Later we learn that Abe has met Mary Todd, and that

she has decided that "he is the one whose life and destiny I want most to share- - -I want the chance to shape a new life, for myself, and for my husband." She feels Abe's life will be worth shaping.

Scene VI, Act II shows Abe in his office. It is his wedding day, but he has decided not to go through with the marriage. On the verge of a nervous collapse, he has written Mary a letter. Ironically, Ninian Edwards, Abe's future brother-in-law, has arrived to give Abe a pre-nuptial sermon in which he warns against Mary's ambition. "Even as a child she has had delusions about grandeur--she predicted to one and all that the man she would marry would be President of the United States."

Billy Herndon, the young man studying for the bar in Abe's office, disgusted because Abe is not ambitious for public office, finally explodes to Abe, "You aren't abandoning Miss Mary Todd. No! You're only using her as a living sacrifice, offering her up in the hope that you will gain forgiveness of the Gods for the failure to do your duty!"

"I'm minding my own business, that's what I'm doing," Abe defends himself,- - - -"And there'd be no threat to the union if others would do the same. When you know more about law, you'll know that those property rights you mentioned are guaranteed by the Constitution. And if the Union can't stand on the Constitution, let it fall."

she has decided that "he is the one whose life and destiny I want most to share - - - I want the chance to share a new life for myself, and for my husband." She feels Abe's life will be worth sharing.

Scene VI, Act II shows Abe in his office. It is his

wedding day, but he has decided not to go through with the marriage. On the verge of a nervous collapse, he has written

Mary a letter. Ironically, William Edwards, Abe's former brother-in-law, has arrived to give Abe a pre-nuptial sermon in which he warns against Mary's ambition. "Even as a child she has had delusions about grandeur--she predicted to me and all that the man she would marry would be President of the

United States."

Billy Herndon, the young man studying for the bar in Abe's office, disgusted because Abe is not ambitious for public office, finally explodes to Abe, "You aren't spending time, Mary Todd. Not only wasting not as a living sacrifice, offering her up in the hope that you will gain forgiveness of the Gods for the failure to do your duty!"

"I'm minding my own business, that's what I'm doing."

Abe defends himself, - - - "And there'd be no threat to the Union if others would do the same. When you know more about law, you'll know that those property rights you mentioned are guaranteed by the Constitution. And if the Union can't stand on the Constitution, let it fall."

Finally when Billy taunts him with the fact that he had always honored Elijah Lovejoy, and every other man who ever died for an ideal, like the defence of freedom, he replies, pathetically, "Yes, I honor them and envy them that they could believe their ideals are worth dying for." Then he leaves to tell Mary that he can not marry her.

In order to find solace, Abe goes back to New Salem, back to the prairie wilderness from which he came. There he meets an old friend who long ago had been forced to return East. But now with his wife and little boy, he is on his way to the new West, to Oregon. "Keeping to the free territory on this trip," so that his negro servant, a free man, won't "get snaked over the line into Virginia."

"Do you think it will be free in Oregon?," asks Abe, to which Seth, his friend, replies, "Course, it will! It's got to."

Abe knows that he must reply, "Oh, no, it hasn't, Seth. Not with the politicians in Washington selling out the whole West, piece by piece, to the slave traders."

Seth answers: "That territory has got to be free! If this country ain't strong enough to protect its citizens from slavery, then we'll cut loose from it, and join with Canada;--or better yet, we'll make a new country out there in the West.- - -I love this country, and I'd fight for it. And I guess George Washington and the rest of them loved

Finally when Billy learned the fact that he had always honored Elijah Lovejoy, and every other man who ever died for an ideal, like the defense of freedom, he replied, "Yes, I honor them and envy them that they could believe their ideals are worth dying for." Then he leaves to tell Mary that he can not marry her.

In order to find solace, Abe goes back to New Salem, back to the prairie wilderness from which he came. There he meets an old friend who long ago had been forced to return East. But now with his wife and little boy, he is on his way to the new West, to Oregon. "Keeping to the free territory on this trip," so that the negro servants, a free man, won't "get snatched over the line into Virginia."

"Do you think it will be free in Oregon?" asks Abe, to which Seth, his friend, replies, "Of course, it will! It's got to."

Abe knows that he must reply, "Oh, no, it hasn't, Seth. Not with the politicians in Washington selling out the whole West, piece by piece, to the slave traders."

Seth answers: "That territory has got to be free! If this country ain't strong enough to protect its citizens from slavery, then we'll cut loose from it, and join with Canada;--or better yet, we'll make a new country out there in the West. -- I love this country, and I'd fight for it. And I guess George Washington and the rest of them loved

England and fought for it when they were young--but they didn't hesitate to cut loose when the government failed to play fair and square with 'Em." Then Seth admits that he's talking "pretty big" and that he's scared to death because he fears that his seven-year-old son may die. It is then that Abe's climatic speech comes, "You mustn't be scared, Seth. I know I'm a poor one to be telling you that because I've been scared all my life. But--seeing you now--and thinking of the big thing you've set out to do--well, it's made me feel pretty small. It's made me feel that I've got to do something, too, to keep you and your kind in the United States of America. You mustn't quit, Seth! Don't let anything beat you--don't ever give up."

Abe offers a prayer for Seth's son in which he says, "Let him know the sight of great plains and high mountains, of green valleys and wide rivers. For this little boy is an American, and these things belong to him and he to them. Spare him, that he too may strive for the ideal for which his fathers have labored."

Then, it is, that Abe can go back to Mary and listen to her say, "You'll return to your work, and no doubt you'll be running for the assembly again--or perhaps you have larger plans." Abe confesses that his friend on the prairie has taught him that "I must go the way you have always wanted me to go, Mary."

In the Lincoln-Douglas debates, Sherwood has chosen to take parts from speeches presented by these two men at

England and fought for it when they were young--but they didn't
hesitate to cut loose when the government failed to play fair
and square with 'em." Then Seth admits that he's talking
"pretty big" and that he's scared to death because he fears
that his seven-year-old son may die. It is then that Abe's
eloquent speech comes, "You wouldn't be scared, Seth. I know
I'm a poor one to be telling you that because I've been scared
all my life. But--seeing you now--and thinking of the big
thing you've set out to do--well, it's made me feel pretty small.
It's made me feel that I've got to do something, too, to keep
you and your kind in the United States of America. You wouldn't
quit, Seth! Don't let anything beat you--don't ever give up."
Abe offers a prayer for Seth's son in which he says,
"Let him know the sight of great plains and high mountains, of
green valleys and wide rivers. For this little boy is an
American, and these things belong to him and he to them. Where
him, that he too may strive for the ideal for which his fathers
have labored."
Then, it is, that Abe can go back to Mary and listen
to her say, "You'll return to your work, and no doubt you'll
be running for the assembly again--or perhaps you have larger
plans." Abe confesses that his friends on the prairie had
taught him that "I must go the way you have always wanted me
to go, Mary."
In the Lincoln-Douglas debates, Sherwood has chosen
to take parts from speeches presented by these two men at

different times and compound them as one speech.

To Douglas's argument that there are terrible conditions in the North where factory workers are forced to get a living wage and decent living conditions, Lincoln answers:

"Thank God we live under a system in which men have the right to strike. I am for establishing the fundamentals of democracy which have made us great, and which can make us greater."

Sherwood presents the scene when the three representatives come from the East to look over "the prairie politician in his native lair." Lincoln gives them to understand, "There are more forms of slavery than that which is inflicted upon the Negroes in the South. I am opposed to all of them. I believe in our democratic system--the just and generous system which opens the way to all--gives hope to all."

How little they know Abraham Lincoln when they return East thinking, "Honest old Abe! He'll play the game with us. He'll do just what we tell him."

Act III, Scene VI, shows Lincoln's campaign headquarters in the Illinois State House. It is the evening of Election Day, November 6, 1860. The crowd outside is singing

"Old Abe Lincoln come out of the wilderness

Out of the wilderness

Down in Illinois!"

Just before the news of his election comes, Abe is thinking what a blow it would be to Mary if he should lose.

67
different times and compound them as one speech.

To Douglas's argument that there are terrible

conditions in the North where factory workers are forced to get

a living wage and decent living conditions, Lincoln answers:

"Thank God we live under a system in which men have the right
to strike. I am for establishing the fundamentals of democracy

which have made us great, and which can make us greater."

Shenwood presents the scene when the three representatives

come from the East to look over "the great problem in his

native land." Lincoln gives them to understand, "There are

more forms of slavery than that which is inflicted upon the

Negroes in the South. I am opposed to all of them. I believe

in our democratic system--the just and generous system which

opens the way to all--give hope to all."

How little they know Abraham Lincoln when they return

East thinking, "Honest old Abe! He'll play the game with us.

He'll do just what we tell him."

Act III, Scene VI, shows Lincoln's campaign headquarters

quarters in the Illinois State House. It is the evening of

Election Day, November 6, 1860. The crowd outside is singing

"Old Abe Lincoln come out of the wilderness

Out of the wilderness

Down in Illinois!"

Just before the news of his election comes, Abe is thinking

what a blow it would be to Mary if he should lose.

The last scene of Abe Lincoln in Illinois shows the railroad station at Springfield. A crowd has gathered to say goodbye to Lincoln. In his last speech to the people, he says, "We gained democracy, and now there is a question whether it is fit to survive. Perhaps we have come to the dreadful day of awakening, and the dream is ended. If so, I am afraid it must be ended forever. I can not believe that ever again will men have the opportunity we have had. Perhaps we should admit that, and concede that our ideals of liberty and equality are decadent and doomed, - - - and yet (suddenly he speaks with quite and urgent authority)--let us believe that it is not true! Let us live to prove that we can cultivate the natural world that is about us, and the intellectual and moral world that is within us, so that we may secure an individual, social, and political prosperity, whose course shall be forward, and which, while the earth endures, shall not pass away."

Abe Lincoln In Illinois played 289 performances, showing that people are eager, so eager, to keep the American ideals. Again and again the playwright goes back to the past to interpret the present. No one character is loved more on the American stage than is that character who so strongly typifies all that America admires. Other countries love him, too, particularly England and Russia. Was it not an Englishman, John Drinkwater, who wrote the play Abraham Lincoln?

The last scene of Abe Lincoln in Illinois shows the
 railroad station at Springfield. A crowd has gathered to say
 goodbye to Lincoln. In his last speech to the people, he
 says, "We gained democracy, and now there is a question
 whether it is fit to survive. Perhaps we have more to the
 credit of awakening, and the dream is ended. It is,
 I am afraid it must be ended forever. I can not believe that
 ever again will men have the opportunity we have had. Perhaps
 we should admit that, and concede that our ideals of liberty
 and equality are decadent and doomed, -- and yet
 (suddenly he speaks with quiet and urgent authority) -- let us
 believe that it is not true! Let us live to prove that we
 can cultivate the natural world that is about us, and the
 intellectual and moral world that is within us, so that we
 may secure an individual, social, and political prosperity,
 whose course shall be forward, and which, while the earth
 endures, shall not pass away."

Abe Lincoln in Illinois played 289 performances,
 showing that people are eager, so eager, to keep the American
 ideal. Again and again the playwright goes back to the past
 to interpret the present. No one character is loved more on
 the American stage than is that character who so strongly
 typifies all that America adores. Other countries love him,
 too, particularly England and Russia. Was it not an English-
 man, John Brinkwater, who wrote the play Abraham Lincoln?

AMERICAN LANDSCAPE

Elmer Rice

The third play of a patriotic and lightly historical nature was Elmer Rice's American Landscape. In the days when Mr. Rice was producing Street Scene and The Adding Machine, one thought of him as championing popular, even "pink" causes, but American Landscape brings in his championship of people with property, even tradition, in the midst of our changing world of unions, Middlemen and so on.

The plot concerns the Dale family. Old Frank Dale, now seventy-five, wishes to sell out the shoe factory that has been in the family for generations. He wishes to retire and spend his remaining years in Florida. However, the sale of his estate, to a supposed representative of a German-American Bund, who is suspected of wanting to use it as a Nazi camp, causes all the Dale descendants to reason strenuously with the Captain; and the ghosts of other family representatives return to add the weight of their arguments to those of the living. However, the death of the captain before he reaches his decision helps Mr. Rice with his denouement.

KISS THE BOYS GOODBYE

Clare Boothe

The fourth play is Kiss The Boys Goodbye. Certainly one would say that this play is a parody on Hollywood's search for a Scarlett O'Hara in Gone With The Wind. "But, No," Clare Boothe, the author replied, "this play was meant to be a political allegory about Fascism in America.....

I deliberately chose that most exportable, highly praised and consistently sentimentalized of Dixie products--the Southern Belle--to examine her, not only for her own Fascist leanings but for her potentialities as a proselyter to the causes. In satiric terms, she is an American version of a Brown Shirt street brawler from Munich in a second Berlin coffee house, Circo".

Few in the audience who saw this comedy before Miss Boothe made the above statement little realized that Cindy Lou was supposed to be the Brown Shirt street brawler and that the country home of Horace and Leslie Rand was intended to be a second Berlin coffee house. True Cindy Lou, the Georgia find, does admit that she does not really want to be a movie star but Kiss The Boys Goodbye is the only unbiased account of the Confederate War ever written. "I owe it to the Abernards, and the Covingtons, and the Culpeppers, and the Bethany, my kin." It is true, too, that before the week end is over she has been offered the part of Velvet O'Toole and a long-term contract,

KISS THE BOYS GOODBYE

Claire Boothe

The fourth play is Kiss The Boys Goodbye. Certainly one would say that this play is a parody on Hollywood's search for a Scarlett O'Hara in Gone With The Wind. "But, No," Claire Boothe, the author replied, "this play was meant to be a political allegory about Fascism in America..... I deliberately chose that most exportable, highly praised and consistently sentimentalized of Dixie products--the Southern Belle--to examine her, not only for her own fascistic leanings but for her potentialities as a proselyter to the cause. In actual terms, she is an American version of a Brown Shirt street brawler from Munich in a second Berlin coffee house, circa."

Few in the audience who saw this comedy before Miss Boothe made the above statement little realized that Cindy Lou was supposed to be the Brown Shirt street brawler and that the country home of Horace and Leslie Rand was intended to be a second Berlin coffee house. True Cindy Lou, the Georgia Girl, does admit that she does not really want to be a movie star but Kiss The Boys Goodbye is the only unbiased account of the Confederate War ever written. "I owe it to the Abnerdies, and the Covingtons, and the Culpepers, and the Bethany, my kin." It is true, too, that before the week end is over she has been offered the part of Velvet O'Toole and a long-term contract.

which she does not accept in spite of her loyalty to the South.

The plot of Kiss The Boys Goodbye concerns a week-end gathering at the home of a magazine columnist, one Horace Rand and his wife Leslie. To this gathering have come Wakefield, the owner of the magazine; Breed, another columnist who is said to have Communist leanings; Myra Stanhope, the handsome blond movie star, who wants the part of Velvet O'Toole; Herbert Harner, President of Harner Pictures; and finally Top Rumson, a wealthy play boy who is interested in movie production. Into this gathering, Lloyd, the scout for Herbert Harner, brings Cindy Lou "accent, family, hoop-skirt and all" to be "previewed" by Harner over the week end. Before the party is over, the Negro servants have decided to leave because "dere gotta be a equural distribution ob 'ebbyt'ing 'and relief is de onliest place where a po' colored man kin hab his share of his hyar intellecshal integrity!; all the men have been won over to Cindy Lou's side, Harner is offering her a contract, but Cindy Lou is thinking she may be letting down the South, but she has a higher duty--"A loving wife and the mother of famous sons" of Tom Rumson.

If this play is meant to be a political allegory about Fascism in America, certainly Clara Boothe was using a theme popular to the American people of the 1938-1939 theatrical season.

which she does not accept in spite of her loyalty to the South.

The plot of Kiss The Boys Goodbye concerns a week-end

gathering at the home of a magazine columnist, one Horace Rand, and his wife Leslie. To this gathering have come Wicketfield, the

owner of the magazine; Breed, another columnist who is said to

have Communist leanings; Wirt Stenhouse, the handsome blond

movie star, who wrote the part of Velvet O'Toole; Herbert

Harner, President of Harner Pictures; and finally Tom Hanson, a

wealthy play boy who is interested in movie production. Into

this gathering, Lloyd, the scout for Herbert Harner, brings

Cindy Lou "accent, family, hoop-skirt and all" to be "previewed"

by Harner over the week end. Before the party is over, the

Negro servants have decided to leave because "there gotta be a

equal distribution of 'daddy'ing' and relief is de lallied

place where a go' colored man kin had his share of his hys

intellectual integrity; all the men have been won over to

Cindy Lou's side, Harner is offering her a contract, but Cindy

is thinking she may be letting down the South, but she has

a higher duty--"A loving wife and the mother of famous sons" of

Tom Hanson.

If this play is meant to be a political allegory about

fascism in America, certainly Clara Boothe was using a theme

popular to the American people of the 1938-1939 theatrical

season.

HERE COME THE CLOWNS

Philip Barry

Besides the patriotic play there was another type of play which was particularly popular during the 1938-1939 season. This was one of the years when many people were searching, groping for a "something" to which they could cling with safety and not swing, as it were, in midair. Many were like the patients in the hospitals who have reached the dangling stage in their process toward recovery. In a few days these patients have faith that they will walk, perhaps a bit shakily at first, but they will eventually walk. Many people, however, were afraid they would be left dangling and never again reach the secure walking stage.

The play reflected this particular feeling of the time. First there was Philip Barry's Here Come The Clowns which had for its theme a man's search for spiritual truth and enlightenment in a sadly muddled world. One might confess that one has had to read the play several times because she was unable to understand its real meaning and the beauty which, at times, is particularly evident. Sometimes^{very} the^{is} is so obvious that the reader wonders if, perhaps, there is something to be found that he has failed to find; again there is a spot of genuine beauty, and a real invention like that when the dwarf stands beneath the very elbow of the Professor of Illusion in the midst of all the other broken and distorted lives.

WHAT COME THE CLOWNS

Philip Barry

Besides the patriotic play there was another type of

play which was particularly popular during the 1930-1933

season. This was one of the years when many people were search-

ing, groping for a "something" to which they could cling with

safety and not twist, as it were, in midair. Many were like

the patients in the hospitals who have reached the hanging

stage in their process toward recovery. In a few days these

patients have faith that they will walk, perhaps a bit shakily

at first, but they will eventually walk. Many people, however,

were afraid they would be left hanging and never again reach

the secure walking stage.

The play reflected this particular feeling of the

time. First there was Philip Barry's What Come The Clowns

which had for its theme a man's search for spiritual truth and

enlightenment in a badly muddled world. One slight comment that

one has had to read the play several times because one was

unable to understand its real meaning and the beauty which, at

times, is particularly evident. Sometimes, as is so obvious that

the reader wonders if, perhaps, there is something to be found

that he has failed to find; again there is a spot of genuine

beauty, and a real invention like that when the dwarf stands

beside the very elbow of the Professor of Illusion in the

midst of all the other broken and distorted lives.

It seems appropriate at this time that one should quote what Philip Barry himself said about the play in a review which he published in the New York World Telegram the following Saturday after the play's opening on December 7, 1938. Among other things he said, "The entire action takes place at James Conconnor's Globe Theatre and in the backroom of Ma Speedy's Cafe des Artistes, a speakeasy attached to the theatre. If the world 'Globe' means the world, I am afraid that is just what I mean. They are not unimportant to me.

"I feel that Clancy is but one man ready and willing to go down in the battle with evil which continues to be fought throughout the world, that all men should live and die fighting it; that it is infinitely better to die in the struggle than it is to live in fear or in the questionable security which follows any compromise with all these things in government and human society that we know in our hearts are wrong. This at least was Clancy's answer--Clancy at last finds God in the will of man."

The curtain rises supposedly at eleven o'clock when the theatre performance is just over. A considerable number of people come on the scene before the play ends--a small section of the world. There is a skeptic, a Professor of Illusion; there are wives and women; there are divers performers from the show, one of them a dwarf (not a midget). The plot concerns one Dan Clancy, fresh from the penitentiary, who has come to Ma

It seems appropriate at this time that one should

quote what Philip Barry himself said about the play in a

review which he published in the New York World Telegram and

following Saturday after the play's opening on December 1, 1930.

Among other things he said, "The entire action takes place at

James Concommon's Globe Theatre and in the backroom of Mr.

Speedy's Cafe des Artistes, a speakeasy attached to the theatre.

If the world 'Globe' means the world, I am afraid that is just

what I mean. They are not unimportant to me.

"I feel that Clancy is not one man ready and willing

to go down in the battle with evil which continues to be fought

throughout the world, that all men should live and die fight-

ing it; that it is infinitely better to die in the struggle

than it is to live in fear or in the questionable security

which follows any compromise with all these things in govern-

ment and human society that we know in our hearts are wrong.

This at least was Clancy's answer--Clancy at last finds God

in the will of man."

The curtain rises supposedly at eleven o'clock when

the theatre performance is just over. A considerable number of

people come on the scene before the play ends--a small section

of the world. There is a scientist, a Professor of Illusion;

there are wives and women; there are divers spectators from the

show, one of them a dwarf (not a midget). The plot concerns one

Ben Clancy, fresh from the penitentiary, who has come to the

Speedy's speakeasy to look for his wife. But in the course of the play, we gradually learn he is really looking for God.

Dickinson, the Sceptic, would know if Clancy were on a "Still hunt for the Almighty! It's marvelous, Clancy, you certainly fly high!"

Clancy replies, "And why not? Isn't He everywhere? Is there a work or a corner where He's not? What's there so strange in going out to find Him?---- I know it is His will that things happen as they do, but I've come to a place where I have to know the reason of certain of them?"

For entertainment the Professor of Illusion draws a curtain on a small stage in the speakeasy. The actors for his performance are to be the persons gathered at Ma Speedy's that particular night. The Professor is to evoke the truth about the little gathering. The effect is not happy. The Professor finally says, "Dear, dear! It seems that even the semblance of truth is not popular." There is a suggestion of a rebellion in the audience. Dickenson, the Skeptic, draws a revolver; in the struggle Clancy is shot down. He presents some rather lofty thoughts ~~at~~ the end of the play less prepared for than may have been desired. Among these thoughts are, "I see now it's no will of God things are as they are--no, nor Devil's will either! It's the will of all them like yourself the world over--man bad by their own choice. . . . the free will of man is, and can be easily turned to Good or to Bad. It's a grand thing is man's

Speedy's speech to look for his wife. But in the course of the play, we gradually learn he is really looking for God.

Blackman, the skeptic, would know if Clancy were on a "still hunt for the Almighty! It's marvelous, Clancy, you certainly fly high!"

Clancy replies, "And why not? Isn't He everywhere?"

Is there a word on a corner where He's not? What's there so strange in going out to find Him?--- I know it is His will that things happen as they do, but I've come to a place where I have to know the reason of them?"

For entertainment the Professor of Illusion draws a curtain on a small stage in the speech. The actors for his performance are to be the persons gathered at Mr. Speedy's last particular night. The Professor is to evoke the truth about the little gathering. The effect is not happy. The Professor

finally says, "Dear, dear! It seems that even the semblance of truth is not popular." There is a suggestion of a rebellion in the audience. Blackman, the skeptic, draws a revolver; in the

struggle Clancy is shot down. He presents some rather lofty thoughts in the end of the play less prepared for than may have been desired. Among these thoughts are, "I see now it's no

will of God things are as they are--no, not Devil's will either! It's the will of all them like yourself the world over--men bad by their own choice. . . . The true will of man is, and can be easily turned to Good or to bad. It's a grand thing is man's

will! Whatever it's sunk to, it can rise again. It can rise over anything, anything!"

The conclusion to Here Comes The Clowns is pure humanism of the Irving Babbitt type, and its citing of free will is strongly American in key - - it is truly back of every pioneer's conviction.

will! Whatever it's worth to, it can rise again. It can rise

over anything, anything!"

The conclusion to Here Comes The Clown is pure

humorism of the living rabbit type, and the ending of the

will is strongly American in key - it is truly born of

every honest conviction.

THE WHITE STEED

Paul Vincent Carroll

A second play which reflected the spirit of that "something" to which one can cling is The White Steed by Paul Vincent Carroll. The White Steed is based on one of the folk legends of Ireland. This would be the story of Niam, the goddess who meeting Ossian, the son of Finn, lifted him to a place beside her on her white steed and carried him away to the Land of Eternal Youth, where for three hundred years they lived an idyllic love life. Then Ossian grew restless and Niam sent him away back to the land for which he hungered, warning him not to dismount or touch the earth. But Ossian, disgusted with the efforts of the little men whom he found infesting the land of his birth, sought to impress them with his strength, fell from his steed, and, on touching the earth, withered away with his accumulated years.

"When I try to make a play that will not have merely substance but beauty also," Mr. Carroll has written, "I go back to the old days, to the folk tales, and having released something of simplicity, I return to survey with much greater detachment the present maelstrom of egotism, persecution and cruelty."

And so we have the story of the modern Nian, who would lift up a vacillating Ossian of this day and make a man of him.

THE WHITE STEED

Paul Vincent Carroll

A second play which reflected the spirit of that

"something" to which one can cling is The White Steed by

Paul Vincent Carroll. The White Steed is based on one of the folk legends of Ireland. This would be the story of Niam, the

goddess who meeting Oislin, the son of Finn, lifted him to a place beside her on her white steed and carried him away to the land of Eternal Youth, where for three hundred years they lived an idyllic love life. Then Oislin grew restless and Niam sent him away back to the land for which he hungered, warning him

not to dismount or touch the earth. But Oislin, disgusted with the efforts of the little men whom he found infesting the land of his birth, sought to impress them with his strength,

tell from his steed, and, on touching the earth, withered away with his accumulated years.

"When I try to make a play that will not have merely

substance but beauty also," Mr. Carroll has written, "I go back to the old days, to the folk tales, and having released something of simplicity, I return to survey with much greater detachment the present maelstrom of egotism, persecution and

cruelty."

And so we have the story of the modern Niam, who would lift up a vacillating Oislin of this day and make a man of him.

The White Steed concerns the coming of one Father Shaughnessy to the little Irish village of Lorcon to take the place of good old Canon Matt, who has had a paralytic attack. Canon Matt has long talked the people's own language, and, as he says himself, "Is not an ostrich or a ferrett either, but I am an aul' Irish sheep dog. I may be blind in one eye and my fur is a bit tore with the furze and whins, but I know the dark well enough to round up me sheep and take them home."

Father Shaughnessey, however, with the aid of Civil law sets out to rid the library of a score of authors who are "blasphemous and anti-Catholic, to refuse the baptism of any illegitimate child or any child of mixed marriage--all that's 'theological procrastination.'"

Canon Matt insists that what the new father wants to do is "to replace their old wayward love of God that is spattered with mud and blood and crudities, with the shrinking fear of God that'll knock all the life out of them. If you want that sort of thing, go and live in Scotland, where the people have measured every word in the Bible with a screw gauge and knocked every ounce of beauty out of their national life, and what have they achieved?"

But when Nora Fintry, the dismissed librarian, and Denis Dillon, the village schoolmaster, get the Civil law to come to their aid against Father Shaughnessy and his Vigilance Committee, there is a cumulation of difficulties. Of these

The White Stair concerns the coming of one Father

Shangnessy to the little Irish village of London to take the place of good old Father Matt, who has had a paralytic attack. Canon Matt has long talked the people's own language, and, as he says himself, "is not an ostrich or a terrorist either, but I am an anti-Irish sheep dog. I may be blind in one eye and my leg is a bit sore with the force and wine, but I know the dark well enough to round up my sheep and take them home."

Father Shangnessy, however, with the aid of civil law sets out to rid the library of a score of authors who are "blasphemous and anti-Catholic, to refuse the baptism of any illegitimate child or any child of mixed marriage--all that's theological prostitution."

Canon Matt insists that what the new Father wants to do is "to replace their old wayward love of God that is scattered with mud and blood and crucifixes, with the shrinking fear of God that'll knock all the life out of them. If you want that sort of thing, go and live in Scotland, where the people have measured every word in the Bible with a screw gauge and knocked every ounce of beauty out of their national life, and what have they achieved?"

But when Mrs. Flax, the dismissed librarian, and Denis Dillon, the village schoolmaster, get the civil law to come to their aid against Father Shangnessy and his vigilance committee, there is a commotion of difficulties. Of these

two Denis himself says, "When I am drunk with whisky, and you are drunk with dreams, are we not the hidden Ireland the poets in Dublin never write about; the wandering ghosts of what was there when the priests and the little men came in from the seas?" When Nora is accused of defiance by the priest, she says, "If it is the struggle of a spirit to escape standardization and to preserve its integrity and humility, then I am defiant. But I am not alone. The broken heart of humanity is defiant, too, today."

Before the play ends, Canon Matt intercedes in the arrest of Nora Fintry and Michael Shavers, the married man with whom she is often seen; the crowd gathers, Canon Matt interferes and sends them all home, along with Father Shaughnessy and his Vigilance Committee.

When Denis, the schoolmaster, wonders what he is to do, Nora warns him, "What do all great people and nations do? They blaze a way. But cowards sit in the mud and complain against God.-----I will have a free man or no man."

One realizes the modern Ossian is being lifted up when Denis declares that he won't be the tool of so many any longer, but he'll give up his school, "To hell with the school. I'm going out to find Nora and I'll drain and dig and plant for her till my body aches. And Nora and I will fight to the last."

And the old Canon answers, "Now go, Denis, and even if she wants you up on a pagan steed, get right beside her."

Two Denis himself says, "When I am drunk with whisky, and you are drunk with dreams, are we not the hidden Ireland the poets in Dublin never write about; the wandering ghosts of what was there when the priests and the little men came in from the north?" When Nora is accused of defiance by the priest, she says, "It is the struggle of a spirit to escape degradation and to preserve its integrity and humility, then I am defiant. But I am not alone. The broken heart of humanity is defiant, too, today."

Before the play ends, Canon Watt intercedes in the arrest of Nora Flavin and Michael Stevens, the married man with whom she is often seen; the crowd gathers, Canon Watt intercedes and sends them all home, along with Father Shanahan and his Vigilance Committee.

When Denis, the schoolmaster, wonders what he is to do, Nora warns him, "What do all great people and nations do? They make a way. But cowardice sits in the end and conspires against God.-----I will have a free man on no man."

One realises the modern Dublin is being lifted up when Denis declares that he won't be the tool of so many any longer, but he'll give up his school, "To hell with the school. I'm going out to find Nora and I'll train and dig and plant for her till my body aches. And Nora and I will fight to the last." And the old Canon answers, "Now go, Denis, and even if she wants you up on a pagan stool, get right beside her."

It will not take you astray--or white steed has not come down
the centuries for nothing."

How this Irish play sings, sings with beauty and sings with its love of freedom! Maybe there are too many allusions to the legend of the white steed, but the Irish thrive on their gift for story telling and legend. It is no wonder that the American audience liked The White Steed.

79
It will not take you away--on white steed has not come down

the centuries for nothing."

Now this Irish play sings, sings with beauty and sings

with its love of freedom! Maybe there are too many allusions

to the legend of the white steed, but the Irish thrive on

their gift for story telling and legend. It is no wonder that

the American audience liked The White Steed.

FAMILY PORTRAIT

Lenore Coffin and William Joyce Cowen

It seems that Family Portrait is the type of play that would not have a popular success in a normal time. Again it is a time when people are searching. Like Here Come The Clowns, Family Portrait is a provocative play. It is a Biblical play and tells the story of Jesus Christ as He may have been seen through the eyes of his own family. The authors took their inspiration and their argument from these verses of the Gospel According to St. Mark which begin: "And he went from there, and came into his own country and his disciples follow him. And when the Sabbath day was come he began to teach in a synagogue, and many hearing him were astonished, saying: 'From whence hath this man these things?.....Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joseph, and of Judas, and of Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. But Jesus said unto them, 'A prophet is not among his own kin and in his own house.'"

"The authors determined to keep their dialogue as colloquial as possible and their argument as close to modern social trends as they could consistently, thus giving their play the spirit of timeliness and bringing it into convincing focus as a family portrait. They have been both praised and blamed for the results obtained."²

3. Burns Mantle, Best Plays of 1938-1939. New York, Dodd, Mead & Company.

FAMILY PORTRAIT

Robert Gellie and his first play

It seems that Family Portrait is the type of play that

would not have a popular success in a normal time. Again it is a time when people are searching. Like Here Come The Girls, Family Portrait is a provocative play. It is a Biblical play and tells the story of Jesus Christ as He may have been seen through the eyes of his own family. The authors took their inspiration and their argument from these verses of the Gospel according to St. Mark which begin: "and he went from there, and came into his own country and his disciples follow him. and when the Sabbath day was come he began to teach in a synagogue, and many hearing him were astonished, saying: 'From whence hath this man these things?....' It is not this carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joseph, and of Judas, and of Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. But Jesus said unto them, 'A prophet is not without honor in his own house.'"

The authors determined to keep their dialogue as colloquial as possible and their argument as close to modern social trends as they could consistently, thus giving their play the spirit of literalness and bringing it into convincing focus as a family portrait. They have been both praised and blamed for the results obtained.

The play opens in Jesus's home. Jesus is off preaching again and his brothers are furious; he is the oldest and the best carpenter. They say that their mother encourages him. A conversation in which the members of the family discuss Jesus runs as follows:

James--If he wants to preach, why isn't he a rabbi?

Mary--He doesn't agree with all their ideas.

Joseph--Oh, he's going to startle the world with something new, I suppose. He's the best carpenter in the family. We can't get half the jobs without him.

A little later Judah says, "I don't know why he hasn't got a right to his own life. He's thirty years old. And he's got a lot of good ideas, too. If people would only live the way he wants them to, the world would be a fine place. Room for everyone and he's practical. Believes in paying people decent wages. Says a man is worth his hire. But not to worry about being rich. That there's other kinds of riches beside money."

The scene changes to a wineshop in Capernaum. The fishing boats are not in yet. Selima, the proprietress, finds business too heavy. Crowds have been around because of Jesus. Other towns are making Jesus offers. She's afraid He may be tempted. Mary, James, Joseph, and Simon enter the shop; they have come along way in search of the son and brother. They

The play opens in Jesus's home. Jesus is off preaching again and his brothers are furious; he is the oldest and the best carpenter. They say that their mother encourages him. A conversation in which the members of the family discuss Jesus runs as follows:

James--If he wants to preach, why isn't he a rabbi?
Mary--He doesn't agree with all their ideas.
Joseph--Oh, he's going to startle the world with some-
thing new, I suppose. He's the best carpenter
in the family. We can't get half the jobs
without him.

A little later Judas says, "I don't know why he
hasn't got a right to his own life. He's thirty years old.
And he's got a lot of good ideas, too. If people would only
live the way he wants them to, the world would be a fine place.
Good for everyone and he's practical. Believes in paying
people decent wages. Says a man is worth his hire. But not
to worry about being rich. That there's other kinds of riches
beside money."

The scene changes to a workshop in Capernaum. The
fishing boats are not in yet. Salina, the proprietress, finds
business too heavy. Crowds have been around because of Jesus.
Other towns are making Jesus offers. She's afraid he may be
tempted. Mary, James, Joseph, and Simon enter the shop; they
have come along way in search of the son and brother. They

listen to the innkeeper's proprietress as she talks. "Do you know what this man does? He goes out and takes a hand at the nets. Like this morning, whenever he pulls, the nets are always full. We only hope the price of fish keeps up." Towns are vying to get Jesus in their midst.

Nazareth is excited, for Jesus is to make a visit. No one is talking of anything else. The inns are crowded. Joseph and Simon are very proud of their brother. They may be called upon to speak. They have had an order for 150 crosses; Jesus has promised to see the Roman Appius Claudius about them.

But soon the people have turned against Jesus. Mary says, "People weren't in the right frame for him to come back just now. No one here had any real faith in him. But their local pride was stirred up.--and he went around without making himself important--just living here as he always did--that's all." To which Mary Cleophas answers, "I suppose they expected him to have a gold crown."

Later Mary and Mary Cleophas go in search of Jesus because they have heard reports of his danger. They meet Judas, who seems to be in a great hurry. Upon going to the house of Nathan, where they have heard Jesus is to have supper, they find the table set for thirteen, but the room is deserted. Later the mother-in-law tells them about Jesus's teaching. She says that he teaches, "The dignity and the greatness of man. People criticize him for calling himself the son of man--

because God is Man and Man is God." Later they hear the crowd. Some one calls, "Crucify him."

Several years have passed. There is to be a birth and a marriage in the family. Esther, the daughter of Joseph, is about to be married. Mary feels that she must tell Mendel, the new father-in-law, about Jesus, who was crucified. When she explains to Mendel, he says that he has never heard of Jesus. Mary laments that he has been forgotten. "I hear that some are keeping on with his work," says Mary. "I hope it's true. It would be a shame to have it all lost. He worked so hard--never took any care of himself. You know, looking back, I've often thought he knew he wasn't going to live long."

In the end Judah's son is to be born, and the mother asks that that son be called "Jesus."

America likes "the common touch." Here in Family Portrait Jesus walks with the members of his own family and as a man among men. And what was his teaching--"the dignity and the greatness of man." Indeed the play has a spirit of timelessness as well as a spirit of all-timeliness.

MY SHARE IN THE ALIENATION

William Saroyan

CHAPTER V

Season of 1939-1940

Today ours is the only theatre upon earth
which is genuinely free. How long will it re-
main free?

Robert Sherwood

MY HEARTS IN THE HIGHLANDS

William Saroyan

William Saroyan has been spoken of as "that Armenian imp." Some would claim that he is an exhibitionist; that his work lacks form. Other critics like George Nathan claim that he is a genius whose youthful exuberance and brilliancy are and will continue to be a tonic to the blood stream of the American theatre.

One loves Saroyan for his spontaneity and charm. What of it if he does like himself and his work? One remembers how much more respect one has for the humble cleansing job since one knew a Jewish cleanser who looked upon his job as a profession; who loved taking a dirty but good woolen garment and making it clean and like new. He believed in his work and others did, too, after they knew him. Mr. Saroyan believes in his work and is eager for others to know about it. He reaches back into his own personal experiences to illustrate his central thesis that life is enjoyable and society at its best in good comradeship.

One loves Saroyan, too, for loving America as he does. He thinks that it is the first place of its kind in the world. In his estimation there never was such a place or such a people; and he tells others about it.

"Any of us who does not try to do something about it is a failure--as an artist and as an American." He argues for

"the day-to-day drama of American life following its beautiful destiny" on the stage. "Introduce American reality to American dramatic art,"¹ argues Mr. Saroyan.

But when Mr. Saroyan offered what he must call "American reality" in My Heart's In The Highlands, varied was its reception by the critics of the theatre. No one was lukewarm; either he came out enthusiastically for it or coldly dismissed it as a formless piece whose meaning eluded him, and he was bored for the hour and one half that it played.

One can become enthusiastic over My Heart's In The Highland. Its simplicity is its charm. As for meaning, the author's own remarks in the introduction to the play may satisfy. "As for the message and moral of the play, it is the simplest and oldest in the world.

"It is better to be a good human being than to be a bad one. It's just naturally better." The idea is so simple that it reminds one of a fable. One likes the dedication, too.

"To the pure in heart
To the poet in the world,
To the lowly and great
whose lives are poetry,
To the child grown old, and
the child of childhood
To the heart in the highland."²

1. William Saroyan, Three Plays, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1940

2. Ibid.

If one is allowed to digress, he might ask himself at this point why the average person goes to the theatre; and he answers tritely that he goes to forget reality and to be entertained. And what does he like? Many times, especially if he is an older person, he loves those plays which are connotative of what he knows. He loves whimsically to "piecen" his past associations with what is being enacted on the stage. So it was with this reader as she read My Heart's In The Highlands. The very title brought back memories of a Scotch father's reading of Burns' poem from which Mr. Saroyan takes his title. She has lived long in a household with an old Scottish gentleman who, unlike Mr. MacGregor in the play, was not a "ham actor" of Shakespeare, but one who, like MacGregor, has romance and charm, one whose heart might well be in the highlands. So it is that she approached the play in a friendly spirit.

True, there is not very much plot to My Heart's In The Highland. Who cares? A starving tenth-rate poet and his son (one just the other grown up) are visited, to the delight of the neighbors, by a great, gray-bearded Scotch MacGregor, an old Shakespearian actor, who plays beguilingly on a golden bugle. The neighbors are ready to bring him an egg, some fruit, or a vegetable or two if he will play on his bugle. His special song is My Heart's In The Highland. Poor old MacGregor can not stay long, however, because the guards from the Old Peoples' Home, from which he has escaped, have come to take him back. So, no longer furnished with the neighbor's offerings, the poet

If one is allowed to disagree, he might ask himself at this point why the average person goes to the theatre; and he answers briefly that he goes to forget reality and to be entertained. And what does he like? Many times, especially if he is an older person, he loves those plays which are connective of what he knows. He loves whimsically to "place" his past associations with what is being enacted on the stage. So it was with this reader as she read My Heart's in the Highlands. The very title brought back memories of a Scotch father's reading of Burns' poem from which Mr. MacGregor takes his title. She has lived long in a household with an old Scottish gentleman who, unlike Mr. MacGregor in the play, was not a "ham actor" of Shakespeare, but one who, like MacGregor, has romance and charm, one whose heart might well be in the highlands. So it is that she approached the play in a friendly spirit.

True, there is not very much plot to My Heart's in the Highlands. Who cares? A starving tenth-rate poet and his son (one just the other grown up) are visited, to the delight of the neighbors, by a great, gray-bearded Scotch MacGregor, an old Shakespearean actor, who plays beguilingly on a golden bugle. The neighbors are ready to bring him an egg, some fruit, or a vegetable or two if he will play on his bugle. His special song is My Heart's in the Highlands. Poor old MacGregor can not stay long, however, because the guards from the Old Peoples' Home, from which he has escaped, have come to take him back. So, no longer furnished with the neighbor's offerings, the poet

and his son continue to starve waiting for a check from the Atlantic Monthly, where he has sent his latest creations. When the fat letter is returned with the rejection slip, the poet offers the returned poems to the Slovak grocer in payment for food. Before the poet, his son, and an old Armenian grandmother are forced to leave their home, the man whose "heart's in the Highland" returns to the poet and the neighbors to play on his bugle again, and to die reciting lines from King Lear.

"No meaning and form," say some of the critics. This writer would like to agree with John Anderson of the New York Journal American. "If you squint your eyes and try to understand it, it doesn't make any sense at all, but if you let it alone and let it play around in the gizzard, it will very likely try your heart strings."

Yet one supposes that Mr. Saroyan is saying that there is something radically wrong with the world; he is showing how starved, yet constant, is mankind's search for beauty. Perhaps he is saying, too, that the really great people of the world are not those who are measured by the number they have slain; but rather are the great, the little men who rise to greatness by the gallantry with which they meet their privations and sustain their dreams.

There are those who will say that Mr. Saroyan's claims the world owes the artist a living. All the way through the years, some European countries have provided pensions or sinecures for persons with talent. Because of our economic

and his son continue to stare waiting for a check from the Atlantic Monthly, where he has sent his last offerings. When the last letter is returned with the rejection slip, the poet offers the returned poems to the library for payment for food. Before the poet, his son, and an old Armenian grandfather are forced to leave their home, the man whose "heart's in the Highland" returns to the poet and the neighbors to play on his bagpipes again, and to die receding lines from King Lear.

"No meaning and form," say some of the critics.

This writer would like to agree with John Anderson of the New York Journal American. "If you admit your eyes and try to understand it, it doesn't make any sense at all, but if you let it alone and let it play around in the glass, it will very likely try your heart strings."

Yet one supposes that Mr. Saroyan is saying that there is something radically wrong with the world; he is showing how starved, yet constant, is mankind's search for beauty. Perhaps he is saying, too, that the really great people of the world are not those who are measured by the number they have slain; but rather are the great, the little men who rise to greatness by the gallantry with which they meet their privations and sustain their dreams.

There are those who will say that Mr. Saroyan's claims the world owes the artist a living. All the way through the years, some European countries have provided pensions or allowances for persons with talent. Because of our economic

system and standard of living, America has not felt called upon to make such provisions. Neither had she established a system of Old Age Pensions or a W P A as she has done within the last few years.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Saroyan's artists are often not great artists; True they are lovable, romantic souls, but can society support persons just because they have a spark of talent and a lovable personality? The Slovak grocer from whom the artist procured his food had to live and provide for his family. But, no doubt, Mr. Saroyan would answer that the grocer enjoyed the poems created by the poet, and the folks who brought fruit and vegetables to the Scotch MacGregor were being paid in their joy of the bag-pipe music. According to Mr. Saroyan the world is just one "big happy family", each contributing his share, some providing beauty and others, providing bread. It is a delightful picture, but one hopes that the government is not called upon too frequently to provide the bread.

system and standards of living, America has not felt called upon to make such provisions. Neither had she established a system of Old Age Pensions or a W F A as she has done within the last few years.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Saroyan's artists are often not great artists; that they are lovable, romantic souls, but can society support persons just because they have a spark of talent and a lovable personality? The Slovak grocer from whom the artist procured his food had to live and provide for his family. But, no doubt, Mr. Saroyan would answer that the grocer enjoyed the poems created by the poet, and the folks who brought fruit and vegetables to the Slovak MacGregor were being paid in their joy of the bag-pipe music. According to Mr. Saroyan the world is just one "big happy family", each contributing his share, some providing beauty and others, providing bread. It is a delightful picture, but one hopes that the government is not called upon too frequently to provide the bread.

THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT

Robert Sherwood

Current happenings certainly played an important part in what was called one of the most stirring events of the theatre season of 1939-1940. That was the production of Robert Sherwood's play There Shall Be No Night, concerning the invasion of Finland. It was a broadcast from Helsinki during that invasion that inspired Mr. Sherwood to put in dramatic^{form} his conviction concerning the betrayal of Finland.

Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne had left New York for their vacation on their Wisconsin farm. Mr. Sherwood had given them a play to read on their trip with the idea of production in the fall. So much interested did they become in it that they wired the author they would return immediately to New York. Within a few weeks the play was presented in Washington. The audiences everywhere were enthusiastic. However the critics felt that perhaps the timeliness of the subject had much to do with the play's popularity.

Now as one writes these lines in the summer of 1941, little Finland is marching again, this time consistently against its old enemy the Russians, but ironically it has joined forces with another foe of humanity, the Germans. Yes, those who have felt their sympathies go out to this country now wonder what they can do when Finland is an enemy to the country whom they have promised to aid. But as this paper is revised, America

is fighting on the side of the allies against little Finland. How ironic today seems the speech of Dr. Ziemssen to the Finnish scientist's family when he says, "You think your enemies are these, the Communists who now invade your country. The Russians think so, too, but they are wrong. We are your enemies, Herr Dokter. This Finnish incident is one little item in our vast scheme. We made good use of our esteemed allies of the Soviet Union. All the little communist cells, in labor movements, youth movements, in all notions--they are now working for us, although they may not know it. Communism is a good laxative to loosen the bowels of democracy. When it has served that purpose, it will disappear down the sewer with the excrement that must be purged."

Again and again in situation, in thought and philosophy, one hears the current belief of many people. Dr. Ziemssen expresses the idea of the new world state in the making, that one dynamic race is on the march to occupy the surface of the earth and rule it. He explains that the remnants of the Polish race are scattered all the way from the Rhine to the Pacific Coast of Siberia. He tells how Hitler liquidates all the leaders of thought; political, religious, economic, intellectual. Among the masses the difficult ones are killed--the weaklings are allowed to die of starvation and the strong are enslaved.

One laments with the author that the display of force must be a substitute for intelligent thinking. Dr. Kaarlo, the great Finnish scientist, is able to "press the trigger of a

is fighting on the side of the little against the big.
Now Ironic today seems the speech of Dr. Eisenhower to the UN-
like scientist's family when he says, "I think your enemies
are these, the communists who now invade your country. The
Russians bring us food, but they are wrong. We are your ene-
mies, the Russians. This Russian incident is one little item
in our vast scheme. We have good use of our esteemed allies
of the Soviet Union. All the little communist allies, in labor
movements, youth movements, in all nations--they are now work-
ing for us, although they may not know it. Communism is a good
latitude to loosen the bonds of democracy. When it has served
that purpose, it will disappear down the sewer with the exor-
cism that must be uttered."
Again and again in education, in thought and philoso-
phy, one hears the current belief of many people. Dr. Eisenhower
expresses the fear of the new world order in the saying, that
our dynamic race is on the march to occupy the surface of the
earth and rule it. He explains that the remnants of the British
empire are scattered all the way from the White to the Pacific
Coast of Siberia. He calls now British liquidates all the last-
ers of former political, religious, economic, intellectual.
Among the masses the British are now killed--the vestiges
are allowed to die of starvation and the strong are enslaved.
One laments for the future that the display of force
must be a substitute for intelligent thinking. Dr. Einstein, the
great limited scientist, is able to "press the trigger of a

machine gun" just as well as his son, Eric. Yes, this dynamic race has been drilled and lectured down to the level where marching itself is enough and the other nations of the world must compete with them, not in intelligent thinking, but in marching and drilling.

Robert Sherwood would have one believe with many others that the "terrible sound that fells the earth is not the death rattle of civilization." Instead he has Dr. Kaatri say, "I believe it is a long deferred death rattle of the primordial beast. We are conquering bestialty, not with our weapons and our swords, but with the power of light that is in our minds. What a thrilling challenge this is to all science to play its part in the ultimate triumph of evolution."

Once Dave, the American announcer, says, "It isn't always delightful to be an American, Major. Sometimes even we have a sense of an uncomfortable feeling of insecurity. I imagine that Pontius Pilate didn't feel entirely at peace with himself. He knew that this man was a good just man, who didn't deserve death. He was against the crown on principle. But when they cried 'Crucify Him' all Pontius could say was, 'Bring me a basin.'"

The play There Shall Be No Night has been withdrawn from the American stage by the author, Robert Sherwood. If the play reflects the contemporary European society, would an American audience wish to see this play, now that America has entered the way on the side of the Allies?

machine gun" just as well as his son, Eric. Yes, this dynamic race has been drilled and lectured down to the level where nothing itself is enough and the other nations of the world must compete with them, not in intelligent thinking, but in marching and drilling.

Robert Sherwood would have one believe with many others that the "terrible sound that tells the earth is not the death rattle of civilization." Instead he has Dr. Haskett say, "I believe it is a long deferred death rattle of the primitive beast. We are conquering beastly, not with our weapons and our swords, but with the power of light that is in our minds. What a thrilling challenge this is to all sciences to play the part in the ultimate triumph of evolution."

Once Dave, the American announcer, says, "It isn't always delightful to be an American, Major. Sometimes even we have a sense of an uncomfortable feeling of insecurity. I imagine that Pontius Pilate didn't feel entirely at ease with himself. He knew that this man was a good just man, who didn't deserve death. He was against the crown of thorns. But when they cried 'Crucify Him' all Pontius could say was, 'Bring me a brain.'"

The play There Shall Be No Night has been withdrawn from the American stage by the author, Robert Sherwood. If the play reflects the contemporary European society, would an American audience wish to see this play, now that America has entered the way on the side of the Allies?

THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE

William Saroyan

It is true that a person appreciates that which he knows and has experienced. Brooks Atkinson, dramatic critic of the New York Times, has been criticized by George Nathan as being prejudiced in favor of anything New England, Mr. Atkinson, of course, being a New Englander and a Harvard man. One might apply this same prejudice to himself as he approaches Saroyan's The Time Of Your Life. Had the setting of the play been a New England gathering place with types of New England characters, this reader might have, perhaps, appreciated it at once; instead she read the play several times before she fully appreciated it.

Mr. Saroyan says, "The Time Of Your Life is a play of our time. The people are people you are likely to see any day in almost any part of America, certainly at least in certain kinds of American places." It is interesting to read the author's own account of his own choice of characters and settings. He says that at fourteen he tried to write a play in imitation of Lady Windermere's Fan. He explains that he had the wit for it, but the environment was wrong, "My world was a world of plain and poor people, broken-down houses, casualness, good health, poverty and uproarious laughter, rather than a world of complex and wealthy people, magnificent houses, cultivated ease, pretended health, sophisticated and discreet laughter. I knew

THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE

William Saroyan

It is true that a person appreciates that which he knows and has experienced. Brooks Atkinson, dramatic critic of the New York Times, has been criticized by George Nathan as being prejudiced in favor of anything New England, Mr. Atkinson, of course, being a New Englander and a Harvard man. One might apply this same prejudice to himself as he approaches Saroyan's The Time Of Your Life. Had the setting of the play been a New England gathering place with types of New England characters, this reader might have, perhaps, appreciated it as once; instead she read the play several times before she fully appreciated it.

Mr. Saroyan says, "The Time Of Your Life is a play of our time. The people are people you are likely to see any day in almost any part of America, certainly at least in certain kinds of American places." It is interesting to read the author's own account of his own choice of characters and settings. He says that at fourteen he tried to write a play in imitation of Lady Windermere's Fan. He explains that he had the wit for it, but the environment was wrong. "My world was a world of plain and poor people, broken-down houses, casualness, good health, poverty and uproarious laughter, rather than a world of complex and wealthy people, magnificent houses, cultivated ease, pretended health, sophisticated and utopian laughter. I knew

it wouldn't do for me to write plays after the manner of Oscar Wilde."¹

Thus The Time Of Your Life has its setting for an afternoon and a night of a day in October in Nick's Pacific Street Saloon, Restaurant and Entertainment Palace at the foot of Embarcadero in San Francisco, and in a room in a small hotel around the corner. There come the various characters that make up the world that Mr. Saroyan knows. The leading characters are Joe, "a young loafer with money and a good heart"; Tom, "his disciple, errand-boy, stooge, and friend"; and Kitty, a girl of the pavements. Besides these, there are an Arab philosopher, who appears all the way through offering his philosophy to a world that doesn't know what he is talking about; Nick, the proprietor, who does not see why any authority would bother him; he breaks no laws and he has had "a dive in the lousiest part of the town" with no murders, no robberies, and no one being "gyped." Then, too, there are a hoofer who aims to make people laugh but can not; Kit Carson, the wildest liar who claims, among other things, that he tried to herd cattle on a bicycle and found the bicycle frightened the beasts; a cigar-smoking society lady, who is still looking for adventure, although she is the mother of several grown sons. One must not forget the literary longshoreman, who decides that the hoofer's

1. William Saroyan, Three Plays. New York: Marcourt, Brace and Company, 1940.

it wouldn't do for me to write plays after the manner of Oscar Wilde."

Thus The Time Of Your Life has its setting for an

afternoon and a night of a day in October in Nick's Pacific Street Saloon, Restaurant and Entertainment Palace at the foot of Embarcadero in San Francisco, and in a room in a small hotel around the corner. There come the various characters that make up the world that Mr. Saroyan knows. The leading characters are Joe, "a young loafer with money and a good heart"; Tom, "his disciple, errand-boy, stooge, and friend"; and Kitty, a girl of the pavements. Besides these, there are an Arab philosopher, who appears all the way through offering his philosophy to a world that doesn't know what he is talking about; Nick, the proprietor, who does not see why any authority would bother him; he breaks no laws and he has had a dive in the lowliest part of the town with no murders, no robberies, and no one being "gyped." Then, too, there are a hooster who aims to make people laugh but can not; Kit Carson, the wildest liar who claims, among other things, that he tried to herd cattle on a bicycle and found the bicycle frightened the beasts; a cigar-smoking society lady, who is still looking for adventure, although she is the mother of several grown sons. One must not forget the literary landsharkman, who decides that the hooster's

J. William Saroyan, Three Plays. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1940.

act is "awful but it's honest and ambitious, like everything else in America," or the small colored boy, who plays a "mean" piano, etc., etc., etc.

And then they come into Nick's place--the hoofer, "hoofs"; the colored boy plays his "boogie-woogie" piano; the stooge dreams of the day when the loafer, his benefactor, will do errands for him; the Arab philosophizes etc., etc.

What is the plot? No plot and a dozen plots--a vaudeville show in which each person and his act blends into a whole play which is life itself. It is the life that Saroyan knows, which, in turn, is the life most of us know, only the setting and actors have different scenes and different names.

Stark Young says, "Almost everyone who likes The Time Of Your Life will speak of its abundance and be sure that he is making an original remark. Original or not, the word is inevitable for the play, which has fullness rather than power, and has flexibility rather than force, but carries all its varied content with gusto and a kind of open delight in itself."¹

One may wonder if perhaps one of Mr. Saroyan's charms is not his youthful spontaneity, sparkle, and dash; what will the years do to him?

One is interested in the fact that the audience never hears where Joe, the loafer, gets his money to give, but he has

1. New Republic--November 29, 1939

act is "awful but it's honest and ambitious, like everything else in America," or the small colored boy, who plays a "mean piano, etc., etc., etc."

And then they come into Nick's place--the boogie "boogie"; the colored boy plays his "boogie-woogie" piano; the stage dramas of the day when the loser, his benefactor, will do expense for him; the Arab philosophizes etc., etc.

What is the plot? No plot and a dozen plots--vandalism show in which each person and his act blends into whole play which is life itself. It is the life that Saroyan knows, which, in turn, is the life most of us know, only the setting and actors have different scenes and different names.

Stark Young says, "Almost everyone who likes The Time of Your Life will speak of its abundance and be sure that he is making an original remark. Original or not, the word is inevitable for the play, which has fullness rather than power, and has flexibility rather than force, but carries all its varied content with grace and a kind of open delight in itself."

One may wonder if perhaps one of Mr. Saroyan's characters is not his youthful spontaneity, sparkle, and dash; what will the years do to him?

One is interested in the fact that the audience never hears where Joe, the loser, gets his money to live, but he has

it; yes, indeed, he has money in abundance to act as the benefactor to many a one who comes to Nick's place. Mr. Sarayon presents characters of charm, but one of the causes of their charm is not sturdy independence.

Then, too, society seems to blame for the plight of these characters. One feels Kitty would not have been a girl of the pavement had society treated her differently. It is significant to note that this play follows the trend of thought of the sociological thirties.

it; yes, indeed, he has money in abundance to act as the bene-
factor to many a one who comes to Nick's place. Mr. Garagon
presents characters of charm, but one of the causes of their
charm is not sturdy independence.

Then, too, society seems to blame for the plight of
these characters. One feels Kitty would not have been a girl
of the pavement had society treated her differently. It is
significant to note that this play follows the trend of thought
of the sociological critics.

MARGIN FOR ERROR

Clare Boothe

Clare Boothe's husband, Henry R. Luce, says in the introduction of her published play, "Her peculiar success does not lie in having got National Socialism on the stage. Her success--or rather what will later be defined as her half success--is in her success in dramatizing the democratic rebuttal to National Socialism."

The plot, setting, and character are all so definitely influenced by what was contemporary in 1939-40 that one must present them a little in detail.

The setting for Margin For Error is in the library of the house of the brownstone era in a large American city. Among other things in evidence in the room are a bust of Adolph Hitler in one alcove; a large map of Germany in a prominent place; and etchings of the Wagnerian operas on the side walls.

The character cast is important. It consists of Otto Horst, the American Bund leader; Baron Max von Alvenstor, the consul's secretary; officer MacFinkelstein, Jewish policeman guarding the German consulate; Dr. Jennings, a middle-aged practitioner; Consul Karl Baumer; Sophie Baumer, the consul's wife; Tom Denney, American newspaper correspondent.

The Third Reich allows no margin for error but Wall Street requires a very big margin. The consul has been sold out; but he has been recalled to Germany and has been given

twenty-four hours to get rid of Horst, the Bund leader, establish more favorable relations with the American press, and clear up the finances of his office. He believes that he can manage Horst; he can lay the shortage in funds against his secretary, whose grandmother he can prove was a full-blooded Jewess. Since Sophia, his wife, is in love with the newspaper correspondent, he believes he can use that situation to win favor with the press.

But, when the group mentioned above is gathered with him in his library to listen to a broadcast of "Der Fuhrer," the consul is murdered. Since every one present could easily have a motive for murdering him, the whole second act is devoted to proving who is guilty.

Interesting and timely situations are as follows: Dr. Jennings's daughter and her husband have been placed in a concentration camp in Germany. Dr. Jennings has paid \$5,000 to the consul for their passage money to America. In spite of the fact that he has taken the money, he has told Dr. Jennings that the son-in-law is in a hospital in Germany, and that the wife, Dr. Jennings' daughter, has died in childbirth in a concentration camp. Then, too, the consul's wife wishes to get a divorce, as she actually married the consul in order to get out of Germany. He refuses to give her the divorce. Since her father is still in Prague, she can do nothing.

In Margin For Error Clare Booth has succeeded in subordinating her fervor about the scheme of things to the require-

twenty-four hours to get rid of Horst, the Band leader, and
fish more favorable relations with the American press, and
clear up the finances of his office. He believes that he can
manage Horst; he can lay the shortage in funds against his
secretary, whose grandmother he can prove was a full-blooded
Jewess. Since Sophie, his wife, is in love with the newspaper
correspondent, he believes he can use that situation to win
favor with the press.

But, when the group mentioned above is gathered with
him in his library to listen to a broadcast of "Der Richter,"
the consul is murdered. Since every one present could easily
have a motive for murdering him, the whole second act is de-
voted to proving who is guilty.

Interesting and timely situations are as follows:
Dr. Jennings's daughter and her husband have been placed in a
concentration camp in Germany. Dr. Jennings has paid \$5,000
to the consul for their passage money to America. In spite of
the fact that he has taken the money, he has told Dr. Jennings
that the son-in-law is in a hospital in Germany, and that the
wife, Dr. Jennings's daughter, has died in childbirth in a con-
centration camp. Then, too, the consul's wife wishes to get a
divorce, as she actually married the consul in order to get out
of Germany. He refuses to give her the divorce. Since her fa-
ther is still in France, she can do nothing.

In Marais For Error Clara Booth has succeeded in sub-
ordinating her fervor about the scheme of things to the reputa-

ments of a farce which is packed with thrills. The audience will laugh at the word "Hitler" as she presents it. In spite of the fact that one knows such situations as those mentioned above are true, Clare Boothe has presented the plot within the unreality of farce so that the whole idea stays within the four walls of the theatre rather than breaking beyond to the reality of the world outside. For, after all, knowing a modern audience's reaction to the whole Nazi world, Clare Boothe was wise to treat her subject from an obviously ludicrous point of view.

One loves America for loving the idealist. Always will she listen to him, as she has listened to King McLeod in *Key Largo*. But at the same time one is experiencing a feeling of love, one is leaving the plays, *King McLeod* and *Key Largo* with a feeling of envy—envy of the characters like King McLeod, who with all the tragedies in their lives, they have had "the spiritual exultation and regeneration" the discovery of what which they are seeking.

It is with *Key Largo* that the theme of 1939-1940 is concerned. The story of King McLeod in *Key Largo* is the allegory of the plight of democracy in a world fast slipping toward totalitarianism. The plot tells of a young man who had a hand of idealistic into loyalty and they left him when he counted his power lost. The plot is in the hands

ments of a farce which is packed with thrills. The audience will laugh at the word "Hitler" as she presents it. In spite of the fact that one knows such situations as those mentioned above are true, Claire Boothe has presented the plot within the unreality of farce so that the whole idea stays within the four walls of the theatre rather than pressing beyond to the reality of the world outside. For, after all, knowing a woman audience's reaction to the whole Nazi world, Claire Boothe was wise to treat her subject from an obviously indirect point of view.

KEY LARGO

Maxwell Anderson

Some one has said that no one except Sean O'Casey of the modern playwrights can hammer as much of the crude stuff of living into poetry as can Maxwell Anderson. The more one reads into the modern drama, the more one realizes how the contemporary playwright hammers upon the theme--the worth of the individual. Far be it from Mr. Anderson, however, to have the American conception of freedom which allows one to buy and sell at a profit; rather is it the Emersonian vision of the "infinite of the private man."

One loves America for loving the idealist. Always will she listen to him, as she has listened to King McCloud in Key Largo. But at the same time one is experiencing a feeling of love, one is leaving the plays, Winterset and Key Largo with a feeling of envy--envy of the characters Mio and King McCloud. For with all the tragedies in their lives, they have had "the spiritual awakening and regeneration;" the discovery of that which they are seeking.

It is with Key Largo that the season of 1939-1940 is concerned. The story of King McCloud in Key Largo is the allegory of the plight of democracy in a world fast moving toward totalitarianism. The plot tells of a young crusader who led a band of idealists into Loyalist Spain and then left them when he counted his cause lost. The prologue is the little

band's last conversation together one moonlight night on a rocky hilltop in Spain.

Monte, one of the youths says, "Aren't we beginning to talk like a lot of drafted men with a choice between prison and the front line? We volunteered, mind you. We said to each other before we came over here--we said if a lot of good healthy men don't die for Spain right now, there won't be any place on earth where a free man can live in a couple of years. Well, we're in Spain, and three of us are dead in Spain, and will stay dead in Spain for the rest of time. Maybe we'll all die and stay dead but the original proposition remains the same."

His burst of idealism now shattered, King has this to say.

We should know by this time that nothing you win means freedom or equality or justice--that all formulae are false--and known to be false--democracy, communism, socialism, nazism--dead religions nobody believes in--or if he does believe he's quietly made use of by the boys who long ago learned better . . . Stalin walking his swamps in blood, Hitler's Swastika in blood above the lintels, the English and French desperate because everything has failed, because life itself has failed and capitalism.

The two acts which make up the rest of the play tell of King McCloud's experiences and thoughts in America, as, his conscience never at ease, he travels from home to home and meets members of the families of the boys whom he has deserted to die in Spain. The setting of these two acts is Key Largo, one of the Florida keys. There McCloud finds himself in a coil which precisely parallels in its conflicting values the night of his

desertion of his comrades in Spain. The gangster-gambler, Murillo--a symbol of totalitarian force--has murdered a man and has laid the blame upon two Indians, who have recently escaped from a chain gang. The latter symbolize in their earlier thrust for freedom that which inspired Loyalist Spain. McCloud can save the Indians by risking his own life.

Many times in a play, one feels that the author has not prepared his readers sufficiently for the regeneration of a character. In preparing for McCloud's decision, Mr. Anderson has created the character of the Spainard d'Alcola. He is the blind father of one of the youth whom McCloud has deserted in Spain. This man is the victim of an earlier revolution, a man who has lived in blindness, and thought deeply. It is he who helps McCloud make his decision; it is he who can answer McCloud's argument for living. Granting that man is helpless before ultimate questions, he twists that sense of futility into a challenge.

. . . . to take this dust and water and our range of appetite and build them toward some vision of a god of beauty and unselfishness and truth--could we seek better of the mud we are than to accept the challenge, and look up and search for god-head?

. . . . and perhaps men help by setting themselves forever, even to the death, against cruelty and arbitrary power, for that's the beast, the ancient, belly-foot beast from which we came

Then, too, the author has created d'Alcola's daughter, Alegre. She has worshipped McCloud when her brother was writing from Spain that this youth was the best and leader of the

band. It is she who makes King realize what he was before all values had crumbled in his hands.

At last McCloud decides. In choosing death, he says, "A man must die for what he believes and if he won't, he'll end in believing nothing at all--and that's death too."

As the playwright hammers upon the theme, the "infinitude of the private man", he is indeed reflecting contemporary thought in America.

hard. It is she who makes King realize what he was before all

values had crumbled in his hands.

At last McIlroy decides. In choosing death, he says,

"A man must die for what he believes . . . and if he won't,

he'll end in believing nothing at all--and that's death too."

As the playwright hammers upon the theme, the "in-

fluence of the private man", he is indeed reflecting contemporary

any thought in America.

LIFE WITH FATHER

Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse

Life With Father plays on and on to an appreciative American audience. One likes to think of that happy time when family life had a certain stability, when it had less feeling of insecurity; that time when the family "saved for a rainy day" and knew that it would be secure when and if the rainy day came. So audiences in Washington, in Boston, in Chicago, in fact in cities all over the country have watched various actors and actresses live the parts of Clarence and Vinnie Day and their various red-headed offspring back in the latter part of the last century.

What is the plot? There is very little plot other than the various daily happenings; mother's queer, upside reasoning, father's bombastic tirades over the debts that mother contracts, the oldest son's love affair, father's dislike of the relatives' visits, the younger son's methods of making money and the results, mother's sickness which results in father's promise to be baptized etc.

But through the whole play there is that family love and loyalty which the average American adores as much as the Englishman. "Vinnie loves Father and is always trying to help him. An outsider mightn't think so, because the things she does are preposterous; but they don't look queer to her. Vinnie is

LIFE WITH FATHER

Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse

Life With Father plays on and on to an appreciative American audience. One likes to think of that happy time when family life had a certain stability, when it had less feeling of insecurity; that time when the family "saved for a rainy day" and knew that it would be secure when and if the rainy day came. So audiences in Washington, in Boston, in Chicago, in fact in cities all over the country have watched various actors and actresses live the parts of Clarence and Virginia Day and their various red-headed offspring back in the latter part of the last century.

What is the plot? There is very little plot other than the various daily happenings; mother's quarrel, uncle's coming, father's domestic tirades over the debts that mother contracts, the oldest son's love affair, father's dislike of the relatives' visits, the younger son's methods of making money and the results, mother's sickness which results in father's promise to be baptized etc.

But through the whole play there is that family love and loyalty which the average American adores as much as the Englishman. "Vinnie loves father and is always trying to help him. An outsider mightn't think so, because the things she does are preposterous; but they don't look queer to her. Vinnie is

very much Father's girl;"³ so says Margolo Gillmore who has played the part of Vinnie. As for Father, lovable, at times irascible Father; who hasn't seen such a father in his own life time?

America loves to laugh, and the popularity of such plays as Life With Father reflects the fact that humor is a trait of American society.

In spite of adverse criticism, The World Is Full of Love is being received as a reflection of the present-day scene. The play is a comedy of errors and physical humor. The story of within the last few years. In only seven the play is about young people like Virginia Mackay. What a reflection of the life is the constant changing in the world of today and the lack of parental love for the children. It is life

3. New York Herald Tribune--August 24, 1941.

4. The New Republic--December 13, 1940.

very much Father's girl," as says Margalo Williams who has played the part of Winnie. As for Father, jovial, at times irascible Father; who hasn't seen such a father in his own life times?

America loves to laugh, and the popularity of such plays as Life With Father reflects the fact that humor is a trait of American society.

THE WORLD WE MAKE

Sidney Kingsley

The World We Make tells the story of a young girl's escape from an unhappy home and a sanitarium into a life among simple, normal people. Stark Young says, "The play struggles with too many plans to be successful. By turns it is a Cinderella fairy tale; it leans on psychiatry; it implies reality, exact detail, and pours fantasy through it. Only some compelling genius, fusing all in a strong poetic medium, perhaps, could force us to any complete acceptance of such a mingling."

The play is a dramatization of Miller Brands novel, The Outward Room. The author of the play has added timeliness by making the second world war a contributing motivation in the hazards faced by the mentally unstable, a fact which was not true in the novel.

In spite of adverse criticism, The World We Make interests one exceedingly as a reflection of our present-day society. How many cases of mental and physical breakdowns has one heard of within the last few years! In many cases the victims are young people like Virginia MacKay. What a reflection upon family life is the constant quarreling in the wealthy family and the lack of parental love for the children! It is this

family background with the climatic reaction that the parents have been the cause of her brother's death that sends Virginia MacKay to the sanitarium. She feels that her parents gave the brother a car when he was too young. What cared they what their children were doing? They were too busy. That car was the brother's doom.

Then, too, there is the case of Jim, the worker in the laundry, who is sick--Jim, who listens to all the war news; who feels "everything that's important to us those guys want to tear up." He feels, too, "If a house painter can start it, a puller in the laundry can stop it."

Next, there is Dr. Schiller, who has been a great doctor in Vienna, but has had his hospital destroyed. At the time, his mother was in Poland and her son knew not whether she was dead or alive.

When Virginia is really genuinely loved by a normal young man, and when she realizes that there are other people like Dr. Schiller, who have great troubles but must go on; when she realizes that she can play her part of use in the world, she becomes a normal human being.

CHAPTER VI

Season of 1940-1941

Properly oriented, we carry a torch . . .

which should illuminate every corner of our public life and particularly of our aesthetic life.

Adolphe Appia

LADY IN THE DARK

Moss Hart

One of the most popular plays of the 1940-1941 season was Lady In the Dark, an original musical play by Moss Hart. Ira Gershwin furnished the lyrics and Kurt Weill, the music. Many plays may have more influence upon contemporary thought, but few seem to have furnished more delight.

The plot of Lady In The Dark concerns one Liza Elliot, a woman in her late thirties, plain to the point of austerity. Although Liza is the editor of the famous magazine "Allure," her severely tailored clothes and lack of interest in personal adornment are hardly suggestive of the fashion editor. At the opening of the play, Liza has come to Dr. Brooks, a psychoanalyst, for advice. She claims that she "has nothing but contempt for women who spend their days pouring out their frustrations at so much per hour," but it seems that she is "going to pieces;" that everything in her life is imperiled--her work and her relationships.

The realism of the play is furnished by the scenes in the office of the magazine, the conversations which Liza has with her associates, the people she meets there; and by her visits to Dr. Brook's office. The doctor, however, has discovered that Liza Elliot is a strange contradiction; that her scorns and hatred of other women is that she is afraid of them. Dr. Brooks says, "You make them beautiful to appease them, but

the more beautiful you make them, the more they continue to rob you, and your hate and fear of them grows. Perhaps the reason for the way you dress is that it is a kind of protective armor--with it you are not forced to compete. You don't dare."

The dream sequences of the play are furnished by the dreams that Liza has of the woman she would like to be and the events that she would like to have happen to her. The dreams cover the periods from her girlhood up to the present time. It is Kurt Weill's music that tightens the transitions from the analyst's office to the dream sequences but also expresses the modern, unearthly mood of the play.

Donald Ogden Stewart writes, "I am able to announce the dramatic trend is definitely toward psychiatry."¹ He bases his discovery on the Lubitsch film This Uncertain Feeling, and on the popularity of the stage play, Lady In The Dark. Mr. Stewart has long been a firm believer in the therapeutic value of psychiatry, and he rejoices that through the agency of the films and stage, its lovely influence is to be spread into many hitherto unhappy homes. "One can predict a marked decrease in marital unhappiness among people as they assimilate the lessons taught to Merle and Melvyn and to Gertrude Lawrence.

"And the nicest factor about the 'new trend'--at

1. Donald Ogden Stewart, "Watch Out For a Trend," New York Times, May 4, 1941.

least as exemplified by 'That Uncertain Feeling' and Mr. Hart's 'The Lady In The Dark'--it all comes under the head of entertainment."¹ Whether or not you agree with Mr. Stewart, his ideas are interesting as a reflection of contemporary thought as exemplified on the stage and on the screen.

It is appropriate to note at this point, too, that it is Kurt Weill's music that helps to make The Lady In The Dark the imagination and original production that it is. Kurt Weill is one of the exiles, who have come to our shores from European countries. In the artistic and intellectual fields this European invasion in the long run is bound to be fertile and creative in results. The Theatre Guild has used many of the European playwrights, and Anderson, O'Neil, Sherwood, and Behrman have felt their influence.

Many feel that there is a subtle artistic revolution going on. Did not the Athenian dramaturgy become the foundation of the Roman theatre? Whether it works through such ideas as Kurt Weill's music in Lady In The Dark or through the European playwrights now in exile, or through those exiles who have found work in Hollywood, our theatre and perhaps our whole culture is sure to feel the impact of the European invasion.

One may say, then, that the American audience has liked Lady In The Dark because it shows the contemporary interest in psychiatry; because it has been beautifully staged,

1. Donald Ogden Stewart, "Watch Out For a Trend," New York Times, May 4, 1941.

provided with lovely lyrics, and acted by Gertrude Lawrence and an excellent supporting cast.

In contrast to Lady in the Dark is William Somerset Maugham's *Of The Earth*. One would not call this a propaganda play. Mrs. Maugham does not have the power to force on any reader hardly once she mentions her political faith. She merely records of human beings who are deeply affected by the evil of political hatred.

The Percivals are a modern middle-class English family, who have lived for a good many generations in a large country house outside of London. They are not particularly interested in the political movements of the world. They discuss little details of everyday life but do not have their minds and emotions. The family, being rather given to the depression that has been since the war, is a family of the present.

John has a family with Mrs. Maugham, his wife, and three children. Some years before the outbreak of the war, John had a family with Mrs. Maugham, his wife, and three children. Some years before the outbreak of the war, John had a family with Mrs. Maugham, his wife, and three children.

It is interesting to note that the Percivals are not used to the social conditions of their American relatives. They almost feel into the living room and even around in order. For years they have been used to it, as it were, always in flight. At once, the American feels an intangible political idea from about the living room.

WATCH ON THE RHINE

Lillian Hellman

In contrast to Lady In The Dark is Lillian Hellman's Watch On The Rhine. One would not call this a propaganda play; Miss Hellman does not beat the drums in favor of any cause; hardly does she mention one political fact. One meets a family of human beings who are deeply affected by the evil of Fascism abroad.

The Farrellys are a modern wealthy American family, who have lived for a good many generations in a large country house outside of Washington. They breakfast leisurely out of doors; they discuss little details of everyday life that absorb their minds and enthusiasms. The garrulous, aging mother gives one the impression that she has always known the quiet affluent existence.

Into this family come Kurt Mueller, his wife, and three children. Some years before the daughter of the wealthy family, now Mrs. Mueller, married abroad and has lived there up to this time.

It is interesting to note at once that the Muellers are not used to the stable existence of their American relatives. They almost steal into the living room and gaze around in wonder. For years they have traveled, adrift, as it were, always in flight. At once, the audience feels an intangible political idea from abroad hovering over an American living

WATCH ON THE RHINE

Lillian Hellman

In contrast to Lady in the Park is Lillian Hellman's Watch On The Rhine. One would not call this a propaganda play. Miss Hellman does not beat the drums in favor of any cause; hardly does she mention one political fact. One needs a feeling of human beings who are deeply affected by the evil of fascism abroad.

The Farnetys are a modern wealthy American family, who have lived for a good many generations in a large country house outside of Washington. They preside leisurely out of doors; they discuss little details of everyday life that absorb their minds and emotions. The Farnetys, being neither gives one the impression that she has always known the quiet affluent existence.

Into this family come Kurt Mueller, his wife, and three children. Some years before the daughter of the wealthy family, now Mrs. Mueller, married abroad and has lived there up to this time.

It is interesting to note at once that the Muellers are not used to the stable existence of their American relatives. They almost steal into the living room and gaze around in wonder. For years they have traveled; and, as it were, always in flight. At once, the audience feels an intimate political idea from abroad hovering over an American living

room; there is a feeling of sadness and apprehension.

The evil of fascism pursues the family. For Kurt Mueller says, "I am Anti-Fascist. And that does not pay."

In the American home at the time of the coming of the Muellers are two guests, the Rumanian Count, Teck de Broncovis, and his wife. It is he who through his acceptance at the German Embassy, has learned of Kurt Mueller's affiliation with the Anti-Nazi underground movement. It is he who points to the newspaper account of the capture of two powerful Anti-Nazi agents whom Mueller must return to Germany to help. It is when the Count ventures upon blackmail that Kurt commits murder.

One may say that Lillian Hellman has all of the ingredients that go into the making of a play. She has the admirable hero; the sacrificing wife; the black villain; children; blackmail; and murder. They seem like melodrama; yet, as Brooks Atkinson says, "the actors do not become spokesmen for a cause, but men, women, and children behaving like thoroughbreds in an agonizing situation. They are people Miss Hellman respects."³

The American audience believes in the individual.

"He knows there is no dignity to a mountain, if there is no dignity to man. You can't put that in a man, but when it's really

3. Brooks Atkinson, New York Times, April 13, 1941

room; there is a feeling of sadness and apprehension.

The evil of fascism pursues the family. For Kurt

Muller says, "I am Anti-Fascist. And that does not pay."

In the American home at the time of the coming of the

Mullers are two guests, the Humanist Count, Teck de Bromovitz,

and his wife. It is he who through his acceptance at the Ger-

man Embassy, has learned of Kurt Muller's affiliation with

the Anti-Nazi underground movement. It is he who points to

the newspaper account of the capture of two powerful Anti-

Nazi agents whom Muller must return to Germany to help. It

is when the Count ventures upon blackmail that Kurt commits

murder.

One may say that Milton Meltzer has all of the in-

credents that go into the making of a play. Who has the ad-

mirable hero; the astutest wife; the black villain; children;

blackmail; and murder. They seem like melodrama; yet, as

Brooks Atkinson says, "the actors do not become spokesmen for

a cause, but men, women, and children behaving like thorough-

breeds in an agonizing situation. They are people like Meltzer

respects."

The American audience believes in the individual.

"He knows there is no dignity to maintain, if there is no dig-

nity to man. You can't put that in a man, but when it's really

I. Brooks Atkinson, New York Times, April 13, 1941

there and he will fight for it, put your trust in him," are the words Miss Hellman has her character Fanny say. Individuals are called upon to perform deeds in this play, deeds that will make a good world for generations to come.

"In every town and every village and every mud hut in the world, there is always a man who loves children and who will fight to make a good world for them;" today the audience knows the words of the play ring true. At Pearl Harbor, in Australia, in New Caledonia, off the Pacific, or the Atlantic coasts, men and women are fighting for the children of the world of today and for the children of the world of tomorrow.

Frenchman, or anyone else—should be a German slave.

Mr. Brennan does not have much to say about freedom in his gaudy play The Wreck. Instead the indestructible figure of a hockey tug-boat skipper represents the very essence of freedom. As a waterman, Mr. Wreckley has risen from garbage to wealth, and is now master of his own vessel. Out of respect for his swift, social advance, he is founding a Wreckley family line, according to British tradition. In a new nation he wrote to the government once to express his views on the way to stop Hitler. Since no one seems to have paid any attention to him, he has decided "to wash his hands of the whole mess."

But as a great many Americans are to learn, Mr. Wreckley is drawn into the war by family interests. He makes trip after trip to Dunkerque to carry off soldiers; his vessel is fitted by an oil corporation for the rest of fuel used in

there and he will fight for it, but just trust in him," are the words Miss Helman has her character Penny say. Individuals are called upon to perform deeds in this play, deeds that will make a good world for generations to come.

"In every town and every village and every hut in the world, there is always a man who loves children and who will fight to make a good world for them," today the audience knows the words of the play ring true. At Pearl Harbor, in Australia, in New Caledonia, off the Pacific, on the Atlantic coasts, men and women are fighting for the children of the world of today and for the children of the world of tomorrow.

THE WOOKEY

Frederick Hazlett Brennan

One leaves The Watch On The Rhine with its message of Anti-Nazism to turn to Mr. Brennan's The Wookey. The author says that the play is not a plea for England in this war, but it attempts to depict the struggle of some little people, who happen to be English, against the greatest tyrant the world has ever known. It is a plea for human beings in the fight of all humanity against Adolf Hitler. Like all freedom-loving people, the author is against the idea that anyone--British, American, Frenchman, or anyone else--should be a German slave.

Mr. Brennan does not have much to say about freedom in his gusty play The Wookey. Instead the indomitable figure of a cockney tug-boat skipper represents the very essence of freedom. As a waterman, Mr. Wookey has risen from garbage to metals, and is now master of his own vessel. Out of regard for his swift, social advance, he is founding a Wookey family line, according to British tradition. As a free citizen he wrote to the government once to express his views on the way to stop Hitler. Since no one seems to have paid any attention to him, he has decided "to wash his hands of the whole mess."

But as a great many Americans are to learn, Mr. Wookey is drawn into the war by family interests. He makes trip after trip to Dunkerque to carry off soldiers; his vessel is libeled by an oil corporation for the cost of fuel used in

THE WOOLLY

Frederick Harcourt Brennan

One leaves The Watch On The Rhine with its message of Anti-Naziism to turn to Mr. Brennan's The Woolly. The author says that the play is not a plea for England in this war, but it attempts to depict the struggle of some little people, who happen to be English, against the greatest tyrant the world has ever known. It is a plea for human beings in the fight of all humanity against Adolf Hitler. Like all freedom-loving people, the author is against the idea that anyone--British, American, Frenchman, or anyone else--should be a German slave.

Mr. Brennan does not have much to say about freedom in his early play The Woolly. Instead the indomitable spirit of a cockney tug-boat skipper represents the very essence of freedom. As a waterman, Mr. Woolly has risen from garbage to wealth, and is now master of his own vessel. Out of regard for his wife, social advance, he is founding a Woolley family line, according to British tradition. As a free citizen he wrote to the government once to express his views on the way to stop Hitler. Since no one seems to have paid any attention to him, he has decided "to wash his hands of the whole mess."

But as a great many Americans are to learn, Mr. Woolley is drawn into the war by family interests. He makes trip after trip to Liverpool to carry off soldiers; his vessel is libeled by an old corporation for the cost of fuel used in

this work. Mr. Wookey writes a letter to Churchill to protect his rights as an individual. But in the end Mr. Wookey is putting character and body against Nazi ferocity.

One likes the honesty of Mr. Brennan's feelings about the free man in a shackled world. Maybe one thinks there is a dash of hokum in Mr. Wookey, but one grows to like the absurd little man who believes in the importance of what he is doing and does it.

Probably The Wookey will not be studied in college class rooms in years to come, but right now it serves as a reflection of a people who believe in the importance and the rights of the individual.

1. Kurt Schumacher, "Notes on the Theatre During War" *New York Times*, May 13, 1941.

this work. Mr. Wooley writes a letter to Churchill to protect
his rights as an individual. But in the end Mr. Wooley is
putting character and body against Nazi ferocity.
One likes the honesty of Mr. Brennan's feelings about
the free man in a shackled world. Maybe one thinks there is
a dash of heroism in Mr. Wooley, but one grows to like the ab-
surd little man who believes in the importance of what he is
doing and does it.
Probably The Wooley will not be studied in college
class rooms in years to come, but right now it serves as a re-
flection of a people who believe in the importance and the
rights of the individual.

FLIGHT TO THE WEST

Elmer Rice

In an article entitled "Notes On The Theatre During War" Ernest Schwarzer⁴ says, "The American theatre is the only place where the case of democracy versus totalitarianism can still be fought in purely dramatic terms. The plays that deal with this struggle will go down in theatrical history as the valiant efforts of American playwrights to wring from their contemporary reality the perennial drama of human life. Whatever the judgment about them may be in a distant future; it should not be forgotten then, nor should the critics as well as the public forget now, that these playwrights have had to face an almost insurmountable problem."⁴

Mr. Schwarzer goes on to explain the difficulty that the playwright has, to make a play which has to be a self-contained world within the three walls of the stage; while outside, the world with which it deals is being blown to bits by a hurricane. If the terms "Hitler", "concentration camp", or "anti-fascism" etc., are mentioned, the play is no longer in a world of its own; the absolute reality of our time breaks through the wall, sweeps over the footlight, and chills the audience with emotions strange to the play. To quote Mr.

4. Ernest Schwarzer, "Notes On the Theatre During War" New York Times, May 11, 1941.

FLIGHT TO THE WEST

Almer Rice

In an article entitled "Notes On The Theatre During War" Ernest Schwenker says, "The American theatre is the only place where the case of democracy versus totalitarianism can still be fought in purely dramatic terms. The plays that deal with this struggle will go down in theatrical history as the valiant efforts of American playwrights to bring from their contemporary reality the perennial drama of human life. Whatever the judgment about them may be in a distant future; it should not be forgotten that, not should the critics as well as the public forget now, that these playwrights have had to face an almost insurmountable problem."

Mr. Schwenker goes on to explain the difficulty that

the playwright has, to make a play which has to be a self-contained world within the three walls of the stage; while outside, the world with which it deals is being blown to bits by a hurricane. If the terms "Hitler", "concentration camp", or "anti-fascism" etc., are mentioned, the play is no longer in a world of its own; the absolute reality of our time breaks through the wall, sweeps over the footlights, and chills the audience with emotions strange to the play. To quote Mr.

E. Ernest Schwenker, "Notes On The Theatre During War" New York Times, May 11, 1941.

Schwarzert again, "In these moments, precious moments are needed before the intimate contact between audience and stage can be re-established."

How have the American playwrights tried to make their work "air tight" against the storm with which they are dealing? If we apply this question to Elmer Rice's Flight To The West, the answer would be that he debated the problem more than he acted it.

Mr. Rice makes up a passenger list for the Yankee Clipper planes flying from Lisbon to New York. This list should reasonably and truly be representative of various international citizen groups. The thoughts and actions of these selected passengers are to be motivated by both the history-shaking events of the day, and also by the racial heritage of each.

There gather for two successive days within the space of that plane, a family, the husband and father of whom has been blinded by a bomb explosion in his flight from Germany; a young and enterprising American newspaperwoman; an American oil man; a German Count, a German professor; a young American couple, the husband, a Jew, etc.

Before the plane has landed in New York the question of democracy versus totalitarianism has been debated; the question of bringing a child into the world with a Jewish heritage has been hotly argued; a plot has been discovered in which the Germans are proved Nazi agents about to spread their propaganda in an America, not then at war; the wife of the blinded man

Schwartz again, "In these moments, precious moments are needed before the intimate contact between audience and stage can be re-established."

How have the American playwrights tried to make their work "air tight" against the storm which they are dealing? If we apply this question to Elmer Rice's Flight To The West, the answer would be that he debated the problem more than he acted it.

Mr. Rice makes up a passenger list for the Yankee Clipper planes flying from Lisbon to New York. This list should reasonably and truly be representative of various international citizen groups. The thoughts and actions of these selected passengers are to be motivated by both the history-shaping events of the day, and also by the racial heritage of each. There gather for two successive days within the space of that plane, a family, the husband and father of whom has been blinded by a bomb explosion in his flight from Germany; a young and enterprising American newspaperman; an American old man; a German Count, a German professor; a young American couple, the husband, a Jew, etc.

Before the plane has landed in New York the question of democracy versus totalitarianism has been debated; the question of bringing a child into the world with a Jewish heritage has been hotly argued; a plot has been discovered in which the Germans are proved Nazi agents about to spread their propaganda in an America, not then at war; the wife of the blinded man

has threatened to kill one of the Germans and has shot the young Jew, who has tried to shield the German professor.

After all the debate and some action, the young Jewish husband is questioning the irony of his "turning out to be a bodyguard for that Nazi bastard." His wife is begging him to get well so he "can make a clean and decent place for a nice child to grow up in"--a child with a Jewish heritage.

Flight To The West is a provocative play. It is sounding a cry for the eventual triumph of sanity and decency. It warns against the blindness of Americans who have been too unsuspecting, Americans, like the business man Gage, who want business to go on uninterrupted. It gives a message of hope in the end, but at the same time it gives an insistent warning against the Nazi disease, the triumph of which would mean the end of the world as we know it.

has threatened to kill one of the Germans and has shot the

young Jew, who has tried to shield the German professor.

After all the debate and some action, the young Jew-

ish husband is questioning the irony of his "turning out to be

a bodyguard for that Nazi bastard." His wife is begging him to

get well so he "can make a clean and decent place for a nice

child to grow up in"--a child with a Jewish heritage.

Flight To The West is a provocative play. It is

sounding a cry for the eventual triumph of sanity and decency.

It warns against the blindness of Americans who have been too

unsuspecting, Americans, like the business man Gage, who want

business to go on uninterrupted. It gives a message of hope in

the end, but at the same time it gives an insistent warning

against the Nazi disease, the triumph of which would mean the

end of the world as we know it.

THE CORN IS GREEN

Emlyn Williams

The Corn Is Green is a play which does not deal with great national questions. Instead in the midst of a great world storm, Emlyn Williams has chosen to tell the story of a Welsh boy who is taught grammar, arithmetic, Latin, Greek, literature, who has a sordid little affair with a servant girl, who passes his examination for Oxford and goes off to a new life there; in the background is the teacher who recognizes the lad's talent and is willing to pour out her abundant energy and enthusiasm, not only to bring education to this one miner lad but to the almost illiterate Welsh village.

"The miracle of The Corn Is Green is not that it is a great or even an important play but that it is authentic and alive in its own right and that, concerning itself with things that matter, it makes those things seem of the utmost importance right then and there on the stage.....The scene, for instance, when the boy sits down to take his test under the watchful eye of his teacher and his sponsor, becomes in Mr. Williams' hands one of the high moments in the theatre this year. Suspense is there, and anguish, battle for a great cause, the whole struggle for the life of the mind against the powers of darkness---against ignorance, exploitation, fear."¹

1. Rosamond Gilder, "Ring In The New", Theatre Arts, February, 1941.

THE GOWN IS GREEN

Emily Williams

The Gown Is Green is a play which does not deal with great national questions. Instead in the midst of a great world storm, Emily Williams has chosen to tell the story of a Welsh boy who is taught grammar, arithmetic, Latin, Greek, literature, who has a morbid little affair with a servant girl, who passes his examination for Oxford and goes off to a new life there; in the background is the teacher who recognized the lad's talent and is willing to pour out her abundant energy and enthusiasm, not only to bring education to this one minor lad but to the almost illiterate Welsh village.

"The miracle of The Gown Is Green is not that it is a great or even an important play but that it is authentic and alive in its own right and that, concerning itself with things that matter, it makes those things seem of the utmost importance right then and there on the stage.....The scene, for instance, when the boy sits down to take his test under the watchful eye of his teacher and his sponsor, becomes in Mr. Williams' hands one of the high moments in the theatre this year. Suspense is there, and anguish, battle for a great cause, the whole struggle for the life of the mind against the powers of darkness---against ignorance, exploitation, fear."

E. Rosemond Gilber, "King in the Row", Theatre Arts, February, 1941.

Although The Corn Is Green is new to Broadway, it was produced in London at the time of the Munich pact, ran in London and on tour through the autumn of 1939 and the war winter of 1939-1940, and closed only when heavy bombing made continuation impossible.

What was there in this play to make it popular with an American audience? It would seem that any audience would love the indomitable spirit of a woman who fights against great odds for an ideal. It watches her as she faces the difficulties that she calls a "whale" that with her small power she can only "prick with a pin".

Once she says, "It's been a bit of a day. A letter from the mine to say no child can be released above ground--- that's all blethers, but still.....A request from the public house not to start a school in case it interferes with beer-swilling and games of chance. A message from the chapel people to the effect that I am a foreign adventuress with cloven feet; a bit of a day." Just at that moment the audience watches her face the Squire who has come to announce that no barn will he sell her for a school. How that same audience must want to help her as she rises in all her dignity to call him a few well-chosen names and then ends with, "I should like to point out that there's a considerable amount of dirt, ignorance, misery, and discontent abroad in this world, and that a good deal is due to people like you."

Almost at the point where the "whale" is too much for

Although The Corn Is Green is new to Broadway, it was produced in London at the time of the Munich pact, ran in London and on tour through the autumn of 1939 and the war winter of 1939-1940, and closed only when heavy bombing made continuation impossible.

What was there in this play to make it popular with an American audience? It would seem that any audience would love the indomitable spirit of a woman who fights against great odds for an ideal. It watches her as she faces the difficulties that she calls a "whale" that with her small power she can only "grick with a pin".

Once she says, "It's been a bit of a day. A letter from the mine to say no child can be released above ground--- that's all blathers, but still.....A request from the public house not to start a school in case it interferes with beer-swilling and games of chance. A message from the chapel people to the effect that I am a foreign adventurer with cloven feet; a bit of a day." Just at that moment the audience watches her face the despair she has come to announce that no harm will befall her for a school. How that same audience must want to help her as she rises in all her dignity to call him a low well-chosen names and then ends with, "I should like to point out that there's a considerable amount of dirt, ignorance, misery, and discontent abroad in this world, and that a good deal is due to people like you."

Almost at the point where the "whale" is too much for

her, she sits down to correct the simple essays of the mine folk written on the subject, "How I Would Spend My Vacation". Hastily she reads until she comes to one paper over which she lingers, "So the mine is dark.....But when I walk through the Fan---something---shaft, in the dark, I can touch with my hands the leaves on the trees, and underneath-----where the corn is green." Before she completes the essay she realizes that she has something unusual. As she talks with Morgan Evans, the author, she feels that she has a potential genius. Let a "whale" stand in her way now; she will ride over its back, and the audience will be there to cheer.

The author never lets the subject run away with him. Here again are the simple folk even as you and I. Here again the audience forgets the heated questions of the day and responds sympathetically to the human reactions of a simple folk. The American audience, especially, grounded in the ideal of the worth of the common man rises as one to say, "May a light come in the mine and may the miners touch where the corn is green."

her, she sits down to correct the simple essays of the mine
folk written on the subject, "How I Would Spend My Vacation".
Hastily she reads until she comes to one paper over which she
lingers. "So the mine is dark.....But when I walk through the
Tarn---something---shaft, in the dark, I can touch with my hands
the leaves on the trees, and understand-----where the corn
is green." Before she completes the essay she realizes that
she has something unusual. As she talks with Morgan over,
the author, she feels that she has a potential genius. Let a
"whale" stand in her way now; she will ride over its back, and
the audience will be there to cheer.
The author never lets the subject run away with him.
Here again are the simple folk even as you and I. Here again
the audience forgets the heated questions of the day and res-
ponds sympathetically to the human reactions of a simple folk.
The American audience, especially, grounded in the ideal of the
worth of the common man rises as one to say, "May a light come
in the mine and may the miners touch where the corn is green."

MY SISTER EILEEN

Joseph Fields and Jerome Chodorov

My Sister Eileen is based on a series of sketches written by Ruth McKenney for The New Yorker. Miss McKenney explains that while the stories were actually inspired by the early experiences of the McKenney girls in New York, she naturally permitted her own fancy to take a few extravagant flights in their retelling, and later approved, for the good of the play, certain additional flights taken by the playwrights and directors.

The play is concerned with the little things that go to make up the daily life of struggling young people in Greenwich village. "It is as completely parochial as is the subway blasting which rocks the grubby basement apartment when the Sherwood sisters land on their first day in New York, and at the same time it is as universal as family affection and the fly-paper fascinations exercised by tall, willowy blondes."¹

Very cleverly does the setting add to the effect of the play. The basement setting has an arched window opening on street level well above the heads of the unfortunate occupants. This street level affords an amusing acting area for the movement of events as New York's feet go back and forth and up and down. The bums and drunks, the policeman who is ready to help

¹ L. Rosamond Gilder, "Ring In The New", Theatre Arts, February 1941.

the girls, the neighbors and their love affair, the endless young men--all form a background for the amusing play.

Perhaps one of the most hilarious scenes takes place when Ruth returns from a newspaper assignment to get a story about a Brazilian training ship that is in with a crew of young coffee millionaires from Brazil. Six Brazilian officers follow her home, and she has lost six others in the subway. The girls' experience in trying to get rid of the "Brazilian Fleet" when neither understands what the other says is extremely amusing.

The Americans liked the warm and friendly quality of the play that helped them to forget all the war and strife outside. They liked its humor of a particular American flavor. Then, too, the novelty of the setting helped to make it popular with the American audience, for indeed that setting added much to the effect of the play.

CLAUDIA

Rose Franken

There is little plot to the delightful play Claudia. Here is a family, a likable, decent little group of normal American folk. Before the audience, they discuss frankly and openly problems that face normal human beings. Claudia, the girl wife, wonders about her sex appeal; ~~is~~ she attractive only to her husband? She has a definite mother fixation, and before the play is over, she must face the fact that her mother will not be with her long; for the doctors have told her mother so. Claudia, faces motherhood, too; in spite of herself she grows to full stature as a wife.

The American audience has faced the universal question of Life and Death in Our Town and On Borrowed Time. Listen to a young husband and wife in modern America face this external theme.

Claudia - You're trying to tell me that losing your mother isn't really very important against all the other dreadful things that are happening in the world.

David - No, I'm not. Because it is important. Birth and death - that's the whole cycle of life; and whatever happens beyond that cycle, is just so much embroidery. (with a short laugh) There's a lot of embroidery these days, I'll admit. But if you can take this, darling, you can take anything.

Claudia - I can't take it, I won't take it! It isn't right for her to die!

David - Who's running this universe? You or God?

CLAUDIA

Rose Franken

There is little plot to the delightful play Claudia.

Here is a family, a likable, decent little group of normal American folk. Before the audience, they discuss frankly and openly problems that face normal human beings. Claudia, the girl wife, wonders about her sex appeal; is she attractive only to her husband? She has a definite mother fixation, and before the play is over, she must face the fact that her mother will not be with her long; for the doctors have told her mother so. Claudia, faces motherhood, too; in spite of herself she grows to full stature as a wife.

The American audience has faced the universal question of life and death in Our Town and On Borrowed Time. Listen to a young husband and wife in modern America face this eternal theme.

Claudia - You're trying to tell me that losing your mother isn't really very important against all the other dreadful things that are happening in the world.

David - No, I'm not. Because it is important. Birth and death - that's the whole cycle of life; and whatever happens beyond that cycle, is just so much embroidery. (With a laugh) There's a lot of embroidery these days. I'll admit. But if you can take this, darling, you can take anything.

Claudia - I can't take it, I won't take it! It isn't right for her to die!

David - Who's running this universe? You or God?

Claudia - There isn't any God.

David - Hey, wait a minute. He's given you a home, a husband, a baby---

Claudia - Don't foot yourself. (In bleak disillusion) Nothing and no one--really belongs to anyone.

David - If you've learned that, you've learned a lot, my dearest.

Claudia - Then what's the sense of pouring your heart and soul out in what you don't possess and never can possess?

David - Because a loan carries a greater obligation than a gift.

Claudia - I'll lend you a baby and take your mother, is that it?

David - Something like it.

Claudia - No, thank you. I don't want children on those terms. I'm sorry I even went to the doctor.

David - But he didn't give you a baby; I'm the guy that pulled that trick.

Claudia - Oh, David, don't try to be gay. There's so much pain inside of me.

David - Then make friends with it, darling, and it will stop hurting you.

Claudia - Make friends with pain? As if a person could.

David - Mother has all these weeks. And it's made her strong and quiet inside.

Claudia - But why must it be?

David - There's a reason behind it all.

Claudia - It sounds like you're the one that believes in God now.

David - All of a sudden, I think I do.

One can see a few persons of another generation shocked a bit at the frank discussion of sex, a sane and wholesome

One can see a few persons of another generation shocked
a bit at the frank discussion of sex, a sane and wholesome
David - All of a sudden, I think I do.
Clandia - It sounds like you're the one that believes in God
now.
David - There's a reason behind it all.
Clandia - But why must it be?
David - Mother has all those weeks. And it's made her strong
and calm inside.
Clandia - Make friends with pain? As if a person could.
David - Then make friends with it, darling, and it will stop
hurting you.
Clandia - Oh, David, don't try to be gay. There's so much pain
inside of me.
David - But he didn't give you a baby? I'm the guy that pulled
that trick.
Clandia - No, thank you. I don't want children on those terms.
I'm sorry I even went to the doctor.
David - Something like it.
Clandia - I'll lend you a baby and take your mother, is that
all?
David - Because a loan carries a greater obligation than a
gift.
Clandia - Then what's the sense of pouring your heart and soul
out in what you don't possess and never can possess?
David - If you've learned that, you've learned a lot, my dear-
and no one--really belongs to anyone.
Clandia - Don't fool yourself. (In black disillation) Nothing
a baby---
David - Hey, wait a minute. He's given you a home, a husband,
Clandia - There isn't any God.

attitude toward the whole question, which is neither cheap or vulgar. Sometimes in a play, one feels the speeches about sex are obviously planted to shock, or to appeal to a particular group in almost any audience. Here it is treated simply and sanely as the intelligent public wishes it to be treated.

Escapist drama, perhaps, but one that helps the American audience forget the reality of all that is awful in the outer world, to face on the stage the reality of Life and Death is an uplifting rather than a depressing contemplation.

Although there are many other plays that illustrate the following conclusions, the plays used are those chosen, of course, as representative types for this thesis.

1. As a nation we have steadily we have laughed. One needs perhaps two hundred plays produced over a period of five years and discovers that the comedy constituted over all other types in popularity.

CHAPTER VII

Conclusion

are chosen as representative in this thesis. Although many of the plays have some other purpose than the creation of laughter.

Season of 1936 - 1937

The House

Yes, Mr. Darling

Twelfth

Example

You Can't Take It With You

Season of 1937-1938

That's Life

Sweet And Sour

Season of 1938-1939

How The West Was Won

Season of 1939-1940

Happy For Me

Life With Father

Although there are many other plays that illustrate the following conclusions, the plays used are those chosen, of course, as representative types for this thesis.

I. As a nation we love comedy; we like laughter. One reads perhaps two hundred plays produced over a period of five years and discovers that the comedy predominates over all other types in popularity. The following are chosen as representative in this thesis, although many of the plays have some other purpose than the creation of laughter.

Season of 1936 - 1937

The Women

Yes, My Darling Daughter

Tovarich

Excursion

You Can't Take It With You

Season of 1937-1938

What A Life

Susan And God

Season of 1938-1939

Kiss The Boys Goodbye

Season of 1939-1940

Margin For Error

Life With Father

Season of 1940-1941

Lady In The DarkThe WookyMy Sister EileenClaudia

II. As a nation we are still idealistic; we still cling to the American ideal, the American way of life. If we find that ideal may be losing its hold in our minds temporarily, our stage begins to romanticize the democratic ideal. Although other plays touch upon this theme, the following are representative.

Season of 1937-1938

Prologue To Glory

Season of 1938-1939

The American WayAmerican LandscapeAbe Lincoln In Illinois

III. As a nation, we believe in the dignity and worth of the individual. Again and again our play emphasizes this theme, but particularly it is stressed in the following:

Season of 1937-1938

Shadow And SubstanceKey Largo

Season of 1940-1941

The WookyWatch On The RhineFlight To The WestThe Corn Is Green

IV. As a nation, have we lost a bit of the old pioneer independence and are reflecting in our outlook "the world owes me a living" philosophy? This idea may be illustrated in the following:

Season of 1937-1938

The Golden Boy

Season of 1938-1939

My Heart's In The HighlandThe Time of Your LifeThe World We Make

V. Or is it as a nation that we are becoming more social minded?

Season of 1936-1937

The World We MakeJohnny Johnson

VI. As a nation, we are aware of the sex theme in our plays; we are ready to accept a tolerant and intelligent attitude toward the question of sex. The popularity of the following plays may be illustrative of this fact.

Season of 1940-1941

The Woody

Watch On The Rhine

Flight To The West

The Corn Is Green

IV. As a nation, have we lost a bit of our old character
independence and are reflecting in our outlook "the world
owes me a living" philosophy? This idea may be illustrated
in the following:

Season of 1937-1938

The Golden Boy

Season of 1938-1939

My Heart's In The Highlands

The Time of Your Life

The World We Make

V. Or is it as a nation that we are becoming more
social minded?

Season of 1939-1940

The World We Make

Johnny Johnson

VI. As a nation, we are aware of the sex theme in our
plays; we are ready to accept a tolerant and intelligent
attitude toward the question of sex. The popularity of the
following plays may be illustrative of this fact.

Season of 1936-1937

Yes, My Darling Daughter

Season of 1940-1941

Claudia

VII. As a nation in the time of stress, we turn to the simple expression of the universal theme of Life and Death; or to a religious theme; or to a man's search for salvation. The stage has reflected this national trait in the

Season of 1937-1938

On Borrowed Time

Our Town

Shadow And Substance

Season of 1938-1939

Here Come The Clowns

Family Portrait

VIII. As a nation, our stage has showed that we hate war; we did not want war, but we are aware that we must fight for our freedom.

Season of 1936-1937

Johnny Johnson

Season of 1939-1940

There Shall Be No Night

Season of 1940-1941

The Wooky

Flight To The West

Watch On The Rhine

Season of 1935-1937

Yes, My Darling Daughter

Season of 1940-1941

Claudius

VII. As a nation in the time of stress, we turn to the simple expression of the universal theme of Life and Death; or to a religious theme; or to a man's search for salvation. The stage has reflected this national twist in the

Season of 1937-1938

On Borrowed Time

Our Town

Shadow And Substance

Season of 1938-1939

Here Come The Dancers

Heavenly Bodies

VIII. As a nation, our stage has showed that we hate war; we did not want war, but we are aware that we must fight for our freedom.

Season of 1939-1940

Johnny Johnson

Season of 1940-1941

There Shall Be No Night

Season of 1941-1942

The Woody

Flight To The West

Watch On The Rhine

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allen, Frederick, Since Yesterday, New York, Harper and Bros.

Beard, Charles A, America In Midpassage. New York
Beard, Mary R. The MacMillan Company, 1939.

Cerf, Bennett, Sixteen Famous American Plays. New York
Cartmell, Van Garden City Publishing Co. Inc., 1941.

Flanagan, Hallie, Arena, New York: Duell, Sloan, Pearce, 1941.

Mantle, Burns, Best Plays of 1936 - 1937, New York: Dodel,
Mead and Co.

" " Best Plays of 1937 - 1938

" " Best Plays of 1938 - 1939

" " Best Plays of 1939 - 1940

" " Best Plays of 1940 - 1941

Nathan, George, Encyclopedia of The Theatre. New York:
Alfred A. Knopf, 1940.

Odetts, Clifford, Three Plays: Awake And Sing
Waiting For Lefty
Till The Day I Die

Saroyan, William, Three Plays: My Heart's In The Highland
The Time of Your Life
Love's Old Sweet Song

Atkinson, Brooks, New York Times, June 15, 1941.

Brown, John Mason, "Forward From 1940," Theatre Arts,
February 1941.

Gilder, Rosamond, "Ring In The New," Theatre Arts,
February 1941.

Saroyan, William, "Across The Board On Tomorrow Morning,"
Theatre Arts, July 1941.

Sherwood, Robert E. "The Dwelling Place Of Wonder," Theatre
Arts, February 1941.

Stewart, Donald Ogden, "Watch Out For A Trend," New York
Times, June 15, 1941.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY



1 1719 02489 2111

ACCOPRESS BINDER

NO. BF 250 P7 Embossed

Made by ACCO PRODUCTS, INC.
Long Island City, N. Y., U. S. A.

